

BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE OF THE CHILD IN HOSPITAL

The Psychological Care of the Child in Hospital. By Agatha H. Bowley, Ph.D., F.B.Psy.S. Pp. 47. Illustrated. 45c plus 3c postage. London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1961.

Dr. Agatha Bowley is a well-known educational psychologist in London and has been closely associated with the psychological problems of sick children for a considerable time. She has written widely and wisely on many facets of child care. This little handbook on the child in hospital is a gem and should be in the hands of all who have to do with a sick child in a hospital ward. It should be read primarily by matrons and sisters who, though normally kind, behave towards children under their care in hospital in an unintentionally cruel manner, on the assumption that the type of discipline they exert is in the interests of the child. It is important that doctors should read this book, especially hospital administrators, paediatricians, and those who call themselves family doctors. Parents should read this booklet, and learn why they should be allowed freer access to the hospital wards. There would be a more harmonious relationship between the family and the hospital, if parents, nurses, and doctors all realized fully what could be done to prepare a child for admission to, and treatment in, hospital.

A wide view of the subject is taken, ranging from an explanation of the child's reaction to hospitalization, and the preparation for his reception, to the attitude of the parents and nurse. The need for occupational (or diversional) therapy is stressed as well as the need for the continuation of his education. The author points out that it is the mother that the child wants beside him when he is ill. Nursing a sick child at home, or sharing in his care in hospital, is the most certain way of ensuring a speedy recovery from illness.

This is now so widely recognized in Great Britain, that many hospitals have facilities for mothers to 'room-in', and so take an effective part in the nursing of their own children in hospital. These facilities are, at present, non-existent in South Africa. If we in this country are to be considered as an outpost of Western civilization, it is high time that one of the refinements of this culture be put into practice, through the provision of more facilities for mothers to stay with their children in hospital. Where this is not feasible, not only should

freer visiting be allowed, but mothers should actually be encouraged to come and assist actively in the nursing of their children.

B.E.

DISC LESIONS

Diseases of the Intervertebral Disc and its Surrounding Tissues. By Reuben Rabinovitch, B.A., M.Sc., M.D. Pp. xii + 152. Illustrated. R6.80. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1961.

This monograph is a valuable study concerned with the hypothesis that some systemic disease of connective tissue, and of disc cartilage in particular, first alters the cartilage matrix in discs and that symptom-producing trauma is secondary to such alterations.

To prove this hypothesis, an anatomical and histological study of 30 human spines in different age groups were made. The photographs, including some in colour, illustrating various facets of these studies, are of very good quality. The author's setting-out of his findings and his sober reasoning is most impressive. Unlike many monographs of this nature the end of the book was reached all too quickly.

During the 30-year period ending June 1959, 2,303 papers appeared on the subject of the intervertebral disc.

It is difficult not to lose one's bearings on the vast sea of disc literature or to avoid drowning. However, this excellent monograph acts as an effective pair of water-wings.

M.S.

HEALTH IN INDUSTRY

Health in Industry. A Guide for Engineers, Executives and Doctors. By R. C. Browne, M.A., D.M. (Oxon.), M.R.C.P. (London). Pp. vii + 157. Illustrated. R1.80 net. London: Edward Arnold Publishers. 1961.

This important book, which embraces the health aspects of all the fields of industrial activity commonly encountered, is described by the author as a guide for engineers, executives and doctors. Therein lies its considerable value, for it is through the combined efforts of these persons that the highest degree of industrial health may be attained.

The author, who achieves the unusual feat of sustaining the

interest of layman and doctor alike, deals with such subjects as the health of the executive, absence due to sickness, equipment design, industrial accidents, and fatigue, automation, environmental factors and chemical substances affecting the human being. The writing is simple and clear and the approach essentially practical. Despite its small size, the book is a mine of valuable information. Naturally, due to its limited compass, detail must sometimes be sacrificed, but this deficiency is successfully overcome by the listing of recommended reading at the end of each chapter for those who wish to pursue further any particular subject.

This book, which, incidentally, is moderately priced, could with advantage be on the bookshelves (and frequently on the desks) of all whose positions in industry determine the well-being of their fellow workers. There are few doctors, who number individual workers of any rank among their patients, who would not be well rewarded by careful perusal of its contents.

M.G.W.

INTRA-ABDOMINAL CRISES

Intra-abdominal Crises. By Kenneth D. Keele, M.D., F.R.C.P. and Norman M. Matheson, F.R.C.S., M.R.C.P., F.A.C.S. Pp. xii + 397. Illustrated. Durban: Butterworth and Co. 1961.

In this little book the authors have set themselves the task of looking at intra-abdominal crises from a new angle—that of arriving at a diagnosis by the process of exclusion when an emergency, the nature of which has to be determined, arises, either from without or within the abdomen. This approach, they say, is one that has received too little attention when such emergencies have to be dealt with, especially in the earlier stages. Their other point is that it is just during these early stages that one is not always able to classify an intra-abdominal emergency as either medical or surgical, without the early assistance of radiology or biochemistry. These should be made to play a more important rôle with advancing technique.

While I agree with all this, I must point out that besides the fact that these procedures can be not only time-consuming and often not infallible, they would certainly tend to increase the cost of hospitalization and treatment, an important consideration these days to many patients.

No surgical procedures are discussed, but suggestions as to management are freely given in the text and will be found useful. The authors have tried to confine themselves to the diagnosis of intra-abdominal crises in their early stages and the diagnostic data at these stages, so that the book should be useful to all who have to deal with acute cases and their early diagnosis and treatment in or outside a hospital.

The book is divided into 3 parts: 'General Features of Intra-abdominal Crises', in which are discussed the background including the patient, the first observer, G.P., ambulance and the hospital; the next deals with a large number of 'Local Abdominal Diseases' including urological and gynaecological conditions; while the last deals with 'Intra-abdominal Crises as part of General Disease'.

The authors appear to have achieved their purpose well, and their subject matter is well presented. There is a short appendix to which reference on points of biochemistry and haematology could be made. It is a pity that the X-ray photographs are on the whole very disappointing, most of them being too small or too soft to show details well enough. The book should nevertheless be useful to most doctors who usually are the first to see cases of intra-abdominal crises in their earliest stages.

G.C.A.v.d.W.

MEDICINE IN TROPICAL AFRICA

Medicine in Tropical Africa. By Michael Gelfand, C.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.M.R. Pp. 243. Illustrated. R3.00 net. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1961.

This book could appropriately be called a companion volume to Gelfand's *The Sick African*. Whereas in the latter text-book disease states are dealt with as individual or related conditions according to the conventional pattern, there is still the need for disease in the African to be dealt with on broad lines and along comprehensive concepts. On the other hand, it is fallacious to speak of the African as if uniform rules apply to him as regards liability to disease. Dr. Gelfand points out how different the disease incidence may be in the different social strata (he classifies them into preliterate, semiliterate and literate) as also the different beliefs as regards aetiology of disease among them. It is quite clear that prevailing ideas such as the rarity of peptic ulcer or, in contrast, the high incidence of primary carcinoma of the liver in the African, must be qualified. Peptic ulcer is actually quite common in the Buganda; and, whereas cancer of the liver is common in certain regions, it is rare in others where carcinoma of the oesophagus may be very common.

With the big advances in medicine in recent times, the ordinary text-book can no longer afford the space for leisurely discussions and personal observations which have not reached the stage of proof. We have in this book—to give but two examples—the reasons given (from different sources) why the infant does not get malaria in the first 4 months of life in communities where practically everyone harbours the parasites, and why children under 3 years do not have bilharzia even though exposed to infection. And why after 30 years of age 70% of the adult population (in a community where over 80% are infected), no longer pass the ova of bilharzia in either the stools or the urine.

Dr. Gelfand states that tuberculous pericarditis is common amongst his patients (p. 22), but does not make clear later, when he discusses cardiac cases with, predominantly, ascites, how many of these are pericardial. A great deal has been written on the cirrhosis of the African. The form peculiar to him is certainly portal, but everyone would not agree with the author that it is synonymous with Laennec's.

On page 144 we are probably dealing with optic neuritis and not papilloedema, and the converse on page 212. There is no mention of the reports of Foy and Kondi of the correction of their megalocytic anaemia by penicillin.

The book conveys to a great extent Dr. Gelfand's very considerable experience of medicine in the African. In the best Oslerian tradition he has a wide experience of personally conducted postmortems, so that much of what he has to say is more than conjecture. A final point of interest—it is surprising that there should be so little pyelonephritis considering the high incidence of bilharzia with bladder and ureteral involvement.

F.F.

HARTCHIRURGIE

Prosthetic Valves for Cardiac Surgery. Editor-in-chief: K. Alvin Merendino, M.D. Associate Editors: Andrew G. Morrow, M.D., C. Walton Lillehei, M.D., and William H. Muller, jr., M.D. Pp. xxix + 586. Illustrated. R6.60. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1961.

Op 9 en 10 September 1960 is daar in Chicago, V.S.A., 'n konferensie gehou wat gegaan het oor kunsleppe vir hartchirurgie. Hierdie boek bevat die voordragte wat by daardie vergadering gelewer is sowel as die besprekings wat plaasgevind het. Nie minder nie as 152 hartchirurgen en navorsers van oor die hele V.S.A. het aan hierdie konferensie deelgeneem, en onder hulle is al die toonaangewende hartchirurgen. Dit is dus nie verbasend dat hierdie boek 'n geweldige hoeveelheid oorspronklike en insiggewende navorsingswerk bevat nie.

Die boek bestaan uit vier afdelings. Die eerste afdeling gaan oor die fisiologie van klepfunksie en oor hartmetabolisme. In die tweede afdeling word die materiaal vir, die ontwerp van, en die metodes van toets van kunsheartkleppe bespreek. Die derde afdeling gaan oor kunsleppe vir die mitraalklep, en die vierde oor kunsleppe vir die aortaklep. By die deurlees van hierdie boek staan die leser verstom oor die uitgebreide navorsingswerk wat op hierdie gebied in die V.S.A. gedoen word. Tegelykertyd word hy ook beïndruk deur die geweldige probleem van die vraagstuk om 'n geskikte kunsheartklep te vind en besef hy hoeveel navorsingswerk nog gedoen moet word voordat 'n ideale kunsheartklep beskikbaar sal wees.

Alle chirurgen en navorsers op die gebied van oophartchirurgie sal hierdie boek sekerlik graag wil besit.

B. J. van R. D.