

AIR POLLUTION

The Air We Breathe. A Study of Man and His environment. Ed. by Seymour M. Farber, M.D., and Roger H. L. Wilson, M.D. In collaboration with John R. Goldsmith, M.D. and Nello Pace, Ph.D. Pp. xv + 414. Illustrated. R11.20. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield Illinois, USA. 1961.

Man is an animal (from the Latin 'anima', to breathe). To live, man must breathe and thus he must have air. While man lived in what can be called natural surroundings he was assured of ample fresh air, and what contaminants there were could be dealt with by natural defence mechanisms. When, as the result of his labours, man created unnatural atmospheric conditions, e.g. smog, industrial dust, smoking habits and other contaminants, disease resulted. This well-edited symposium by 31 international experts covers the whole field of air pollution. It is of considerable interest to specialist physicians and town-planning engineers and is a 'must' for all medical officers of health.

L.G.W.

VIRUS MENINGO-ENCEPHALITIS

Virus Meningo-Encephalitis. Ciba Foundation Study Group No. 7. Ed. by G. E. W. Wolstenholme, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., M.R.C.P. and Margaret P. Cameron, M.A. Pp. viii + 120. R1.25. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1961.

This study of virus meningo-encephalitis is of immediate interest. Aetiologically, the following types are important to recognize:

1. Meningo-encephalitis associated with specific viral diseases, where the virus (a) directly invades the nervous system, as in poliomyelitis and mumps; and (b) indirectly, where it acts as an antigen to produce an allergic nervous response as in occasional postinfectious complications in vaccinia, measles, etc.

2. Meningo-encephalitis, caused by ECHO and Coxsackie viruses, merits the attention devoted to it in the text.

Some 28 distinct types of ECHO virus have been identified, definite types becoming associated with benign aseptic meningitis, infantile gastro-enteritis, respiratory illness, etc.

Certain of the 20 known types of Coxsackie virus are likewise known to cause benign meningo-encephalitis, epidemic pleurodynia and myalgia, herpangina, fatal encephalomyocarditis of the newborn, and summer diarrhoea in infants.

3. The importance of animals as a source of viral meningo-encephalitis in man—often vector-borne by the tick or mosquito, or through animals' milk—receives attention as well.

This booklet contains a mass of clinical, virological and pathological information, presented in an interesting and eminently readable form. It should be widely read and does focus attention on the lack of readily-available virus laboratories in South Africa.

H.R.A.

TRANSPLANTATION OF TISSUES

The Transplantation of Tissues and Organs. By Michael F. A. Woodruff, M.D., M.S. (Melb.), F.R.C.S., F.R.C.S.E.,

F.R.A.C.S. Pp. xxxiii + 777. 196 illustrations. R20.40. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications and Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1960.

So much is being written these days in this field that it is becoming a vast task to keep abreast of the literature and to separate the wheat from the chaff. This book is a very useful one in that, while covering the subject of tissue and organ transplantation in an interesting and authoritative, but general, way, the history of the many important discoveries of recent years are reviewed and their scientific and clinical implications are dealt with and possible avenues of future research are suggested. Written entirely by a single author (except for the sections on ophthalmology and orthopaedics) there is none of the distracting style variation often present in a book covering so wide a field.

Professor Woodruff wrote with both biologists and surgeons in mind, but this work will be of interest to everyone, being very simple to follow. Special features are his brief descriptions of the work of all the important contributors to the literature, and over 4,000 references to published papers are included for those wishing to go more deeply into a particular aspect. The early history of the subject is excellently surveyed and the book is well illustrated with research and clinical photographs, tables, numerous diagrams and some early engravings.

C.N.B.

UNDERGRADUATE DERMATOLOGY

Dermatology for Students. Ed. by Ray O. Nooijin, M.D. Pp. xiii + 301. Illustrated. R7.60. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1961.

The time factor allocated to the special subjects in all medical schools is so limited that lecturers, particularly in dermatology, are faced with the serious problem of how much an undergraduate can absorb, and to what extent must this subject be taught to make the common dermatoses easily recognizable.

The editor and his contributors, many of whom are undoubtedly men of wide experience in this field, must have had this factor in mind when arranging this text book for students in dermatology.

The illustrations are excellent and the descriptions of the various dermatoses are written in concise and simple language, very easy to follow. I must, however, criticize the disjointed arrangements of the different chapters. Since the editor emphasizes the fact that this is a book for students, it might have simplified matters if, after the chapter dealing with the functional anatomy of the skin and the appendages, congenital defects, dermatoses of coccal origin, parasitic infections, viral, allergic and toxic conditions were discussed in this order, ending with erythrosquamous eruptions.

R.L.