

BOEKBESPREKINGS : BOOK REVIEWS

DISEASE AND INJURY

Disease and Injury. Ed. by Leopold Brahdly, M.D. Pp. xviii+482. Illustrated. R10.00 net. Philadelphia and Montreal: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1961. Distributed by Pitman Medical Publishing Co. Ltd., London.

The 25 contributors to this book are all authorities in their own fields of medical practice, and each in his own field discusses the question — 'Did a given injury cause, precipitate, or aggravate the disease?'

In these days of compensation and litigation the need for medical witnesses to be really expert in their testimony is of much greater importance than it was some years ago. Much the same applies to the certificates which a doctor is called upon to issue almost daily. The chapters of this book are designed to assist the practitioner in these important aspects of his practice.

The late Dr. Samuel Kahn was responsible for a similar symposium in 1937 which was published under the title of 'Trauma and disease.' There have been others with similar names, but this new book contains the latest advances in this subject and is completely up-to-date. A.H.T.

TABAK

Tobacco. Experimental and Clinical Studies. By P. S. Larson, Ph.D., H. B. Haag, M.D., and H. Silvette, Ph.D. Pp. xii+932. Illustrated. R16.00. Postage: 27½c. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1961.

Daar is etlike honderd miljoene rokers in die wêreld vandag. Tabak het vir meer as 300 jaar stadig in gewildheid toegeneem, is as medisyne gebruik, en staan vandag in die regbank, aangeklaag as 'n karsinogeen en kardiovaskulêre gif. As die mediese literatuur oor die laaste dekade bekyk word op hierdie gebied alleen, met die doel om 'n stelling te probeer maak, word jy dikwels gevang. W. B. Bean het in geen onsekere terme, so 'n poging veroordeel as 'befogged gyrations in the smoke-filled room of his mental processes' (p. 785). Dit geld ook vir soveel ander studies op die gebied van tabak, dat die skrywers van hierdie monogram die enigste logiese uitweg gekies het: Vertel die hele storie en laat die gevolgtrekkings vir jou leser. Hulle slaag uitmuntend hierin. Uit 1,200 tydskrifte is meer as 6,000 artikels hersien, heeltemal ongeselekteerd. Ook word die polemie uit briewerubrieke in die wetenskaplike- en leke-pers bygehaal.

Die absorpsie van tabak word bespreek, soos gevind in studies van verskillende organe by verskillende diersoorte en mense. Die effek op orgaansisteme word elk in sy eie hoofstuk bespreek en sluit studies in wat deur die dierewêreld strek vanaf *Bacillus anthracis* tot by *Homo sapiens*.

Hierna word die mens as geheel, sy psige en soma, beskou onder die invloed van tabak.

Die laaste paar hoofstukke word gegroepeer onder die hoof: *Tabak in verhouding tot spesifieke siektes*. Deel I handel meer oor diverse siektetoestande van verskeie orgaansisteme, Deel II bespreek die verhouding tot kardiovaskulêre siektes, en Deel III die verhouding tot die neoplastiese proses.

Verwysings na tegnieke en farmakologies aktiewe bestanddele van tabak is in 2 byvoegsels vervat.

As hierdie bibliografie die les vervat in Bean se woorde: 'Testimony is not evidence; and evidence is not proof' by lesers van tabak-literatuur tuisbring, het dit reeds baie bereik.

Die boek is 'n naslaanwerk, en hoewel elke geneesheer ongeag sy spesifieke gebied van belangstelling, op een of ander tyd hiervan gebruik sal wil maak, is dit te betwyfel of veel individue hom sal aanskak. 'n Geneeskundige biblioteek sonder hierdie boek is egter nie toegerus vir naslaanwerk oor tabak — 'that virtuous herb if opportunely taken.' H.P.W.

FOETAL ELECTROCARDIOGRAPHY

Foetal Electrocardiography. The Electrical Activity of the Foetal Heart. By Saul David Larks, B.S.E.E., M.S. (E.E.), Ph.D. Pp. viii+109. Illustrated. R5.20 Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1961.

This newer application of electrocardiography to the study of the foetus will no doubt prove to be a most important advance.

In this book we find the description of the underlying principles of the electromotive forces generated by the foetal heart and also an outline of the technique employed in taking a foetal electrocardiogram. Thereafter the author presents his findings in various stages of normal pregnancy, and outlines experience with abnormal conditions as well as giving a description of the foetal electrocardiogram in animals.

The various aspects discussed are well illustrated with graphs.

Most important appears to be the value of this technique in detecting the presence of foetal life from an early stage, even as early as 11 weeks, also the possibility of defining the presentation of the foetus, the presence of multiple pregnan-

cies, and the behaviour of the foetal heart during actual delivery and under varying conditions of stress.

It appears too that there are definite influences from the maternal side on the behaviour of a foetal heart.

It seems that foetal electrocardiography will offer much to the further understanding of early foetal life, and that it has much to offer obstetricians, physicians, anaesthetists, and cardiologists alike.

A.J.B.

PATHOLOGY OF IONIZING RADIATION

The Pathology of Ionizing Radiation. By Shields Warren, M.D., Sc.D., LL.D. Pp. ix+42. Illustrated. R2.40 net. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1961.

The author is a distinguished pathologist who has been closely associated with the medical aspects of the development of the atomic bomb. The monograph based on lectures the author has given on the subject, is very concise. It consists, with the references, of 40 pages. There is, however, a great deal of information packed into this small volume on the subject of the acute radiation syndrome and the pathological effects of ionizing radiation. In the present atomic age, every senior medical student and every doctor must have some knowledge of the subject of the effects of ionizing radiation. The book is easily read and can be read through in a matter of two hours. Every medical student, after he has completed his course in pathology, should be able to follow the description of the pathological effect of ionizing radiation, and it follows that every senior medical student and general practitioner and specialist should read this monograph. Every diagnostic radiologist should have this monograph, and even for the radiotherapy specialist it forms a very good summary. The monograph is excellently prepared and it is a pleasure to read it.

M.W.