

## BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

### METHODS OF STAINING

*Staining Procedures*, used by the Biological Staining Commission. 2nd edition, revised by H. J. Conn, Mary A. Darrow and Victor M. Emmel. Pp. xii+289. R4.00. 22½c postage. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1960.

This book is mainly a selection of staining methods as used in American laboratories. It is not a complete treatise in regard to staining, but it is an excellent help in the standardization of existing methods.

Although the book is not meant to be complete, we would like to see included some classical procedures, such as Neisser's diphtheria staining. Not too much value is given to historical facts, for instance the fluorescence method ascribed to Richards and Miller (1941) was already established by Hagemann in 1937. Repetitions of one and the same method, e.g. description of the fluorescence method on page 229 and again on page 246 could easily be omitted.

H.D.B.

### GRAFTING WITH POSTMORTEM SKIN

*Postmortem Homografts*. By James Barrett Brown, M.D., F.A.C.S. and Minot P. Fryer, M.D., F.A.C.S. Pp. vii+64. 22 figures. R4.40. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1960.

In this rather small book the authors make a plea for the use of postmortem skin in the treatment of extensive burns.

It is a very true adage that skin is the best dressing for burns. Parental skin, particularly on the maternal side, is the tissue of election. This, however, involves considerable suffering for the donor and the areas from which the skin has been taken will always be slightly noticeable.

Postmortem skin, though less satisfactory, tends to survive for about 3-5 weeks, by which time the patient's general condition has usually stabilized, and further grafting can be carried out with his own skin.

The authors deal with varying methods of preserving the 'bank skin', of which low-temperature freezing appears to be the most satisfactory.

N.P.

### YEAR BOOK OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY

*The Year Book of Obstetrics and Gynaecology 1960-1961 (Year Book Series)*. Edited by J. P. Greenhill, B.S., M.S., F.A.C.S., F.I.C.S. (Honorary). Pp. 576. Illustrated. \$8.00. Chicago: The Year Book Publishers. 1960.

The latest Year Book follows the pattern and high standard of similar previous editions. Summaries of articles published during the past year are grouped under the following headings:

*Obstetrics*: The evolution of obstetrics, physiology of pregnancy, abortion, ectopic pregnancy, complications of pregnancy, toxæmias, labour, analgesia and anaesthesia, complications of labour, operative obstetrics, haemorrhage of labour, puerperium, and the newborn.

*Gynaecology*: Diagnosis in gynaecology, infertility, operative gynaecology, infections, benign tumours, malignant tumours, menstrual disorders, and endocrinology.

It is noticeable that more attention is now paid to articles from the European continent, South Africa, and South America. *The Year Book of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* provides a practical way of keeping abreast with the increasing amount of literature.

J.N.dV.

### WRITINGS OF HENRY SIGERIST

*Henry E. Sigerist on the History of Medicine*. Edited by Félix Martí-Ibáñez, M.D. Pp. xviii+313. \$6.75. New York: MD Publications, Inc. 1960.

*Henry E. Sigerist on the Sociology of Medicine*. Edited by Milton I. Roemer, M.D. Pp. x+397. \$6.75. New York: MD Publications, Inc. 1960.

Much has been written of the greatness of Sigerist as a medical historian, a medical sociologist and as a man, and it would be superfluous to do more than mention these qualities here. The editors of these two parallel works have chosen a comprehensive selection of his papers and addresses for these anthologies, which reflect not only his subjects but the man himself. They make excellent and stimulating reading.

A.H.T.