

HEART SOUNDS ON RECORD

Auscultation of the Heart. By J. B. Barlow and W. A. Pocock. 12" long-playing record. Commentator: Stephen O'Reilly. Johannesburg: Decca Record LK 4370. 1961.

I have heard many records of heart sounds and feel that this is perhaps the best of a whole series of records on auscultation and phonocardiography.

Weaknesses there must be, and as Prof. G. Elliott states in his introduction, a recording is not quite the same as listening with a stethoscope; this is an inherent weakness.

In my opinion, but some of my colleagues disagree with me, Dr. Barlow himself should have done the commentary. It is obvious, however beautiful the voice of the commentator is in this record, that it is a dry-as-dust reading of a description. Every point has the same emphasis and obviously the commentator does not understand the implications. Having heard Dr. Barlow speak on platforms, etc., I myself would have been very happy for him to do this commentary himself. The emphasis would have then been appropriate and the whole record would have been an 'alive' transmission.

Are there omissions? There have to be. It is impossible to cover the whole of auscultation on two sides of a disc, but there is a great deal of 'meat'.

Seeing that the space was limited perhaps a little less might have been said about mitral incompetence and certainly more about coarctation and the various murmurs found in coarctation according to the size of the orifice or the stenosis. The record is highly recommended. M.N.

PROSTATIC INCONTINENCE

Paradoxical Incontinence in Prostatic Patients. A cystometric and clinical study. By K. T. Gjertsen. Pp. 99. R2.75. Oslo: Norwegian Universities Press. 1961. Obtainable from P. B. Mayer, P.O. Box 713, Cape Town.

This monograph represents 9 years' work on a subject that is more commonly, and apparently incorrectly, known as overflow incontinence.

During this period 103 patients with prostatic obstruction and 20 normal individuals were carefully investigated by cystometry.

The author concludes that the incontinence in prostatic patients is due to detrusor contractions and that, most commonly, bladder tone is increased and bladder distension is the rule; however, a marked loss of sensation of the desire to micturate is a constant symptom and a fundamental factor in the production of the incontinence.

An interesting monograph for urologists. I.J.

NEUROPATHOLOGY

Basic Neuropathological Technique. By G. Gasser, F.I.M.L.T. Pp. x + 77. Illustrated. R2.00. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1961.

A vast number of techniques have been devised for the histopathological examination of the nervous system. The number and variety of these offer an embarrassing and bewildering choice to technicians in general pathology laboratories who have not the experience to select the best methods for specific cases. This leads to frequent failures, waste of time and materials, discouragement and the shelving of such cases for future (often indefinite) investigations.

In this volume, the author has chosen to describe a selected series of tried and proved methods which are both simple and reliable. He does so with clarity and with attention to the important minor details which so often differentiate between success and failure. Commencing with the technique of

specialized postmortem procedures for particular cases, he describes methods of fixation, processing and staining of the nervous system which give full coverage for accurate diagnosis of diseases of this complex organ.

The method of taking representative blocks for histological examination of the brain and spinal cord deserves consideration as a routine procedure.

With this volume available the standards of neuropathological examinations in laboratories not normally specializing in this work should improve immeasurably. B.J.P.B.

ANAESTHETIC HISTORY

Essays on the first Hundred Years of Anaesthesia. Vol. II. By W. Stanley Sykes, M.B.E., M.B., B.Chir. (Cantab.), D.A. Pp. viii + 187. Illustrated. R3.00 net. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1961.

This second volume of essays by the late Dr. W. Stanley Sykes provides us with further fruits of the contemplation by its author of his professional predecessors, their methods and some of their equipment. It is not just a dry history of anaesthesia, but a collection of stimulating essays, the material for which has clearly taken many painstaking hours to collect. The many illustrations and descriptions of the armamentarium of the pioneers in anaesthesia form a fascinating documentation of the ingenuity of their inventors, whose virtues and failings are discussed with equal candour and often with considerable humour.

This book, with its companion volume, can be read with enjoyment by anyone, be he medical man or layman. The anaesthetist will find its wealth of accurate historical research of special value. A.B.B.

ANIMAL VIROLOGY

Introduction to Animal Virology. By A. P. Waterson, M.D., M.R.C.P. Pp. viii + 96. Illustrated. R2.25. London: Cambridge University Press. 1961.

To the experienced virologist, and their number in South Africa is so woefully small, this excellent little book will make interesting light reading. To others it is recommended as a concise outline of the quite remarkable advances that have been made in the study of viruses during the last few years. Attention is focussed upon the vastly different approach to his problems by the virologist compared with students in other biological fields, who will at least become acquainted with the new terminology which has developed. The strict accuracy of the many references is to be commended. R.A.A.

REPAIR OF VESICO-VAGINAL FISTULA

The Vesico-Vaginal Fistula. By J. Chassar Moir, M.D. (Edin.), M.A., D.M. (Oxon.), F.R.C.S. (Edin.), F.R.C.O.G., Hon.L.L.D. Queen's University, Ontario. Pp. vii + 151. Illustrated. R4.00 plus 22½c postage. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1961.

This is a beautiful book. To those who have seen Professor Moir at work, it will be obvious that he has devoted the same precision and meticulous care, to which he owes his phenomenal success in the repair of the vesico-vaginal fistula, to the production of this book.

It starts off with an inspired and at times moving account of the life of J. Marion Sims, the founder of gynaecology as a separate specialty. This chapter must surely become a classic in medical historical writing.

The main subject matter of the book is a description of the pre- and postoperative care and the technique of the repair of the vesico-vaginal fistula, based on the author's experience

of some 250 patients. He admits that there are many gynaecological surgeons in Africa and India, especially, who have a wider practical experience of the subject of this book—Professor Moir has acquired his experience of 250 patients over the course of 30 years, whereas at Groote Schuur Hospital alone, in 1960, 51 vesico-vaginal fistulae were repaired—but many of the surgeons who are now frequently performing the operation must owe a great deal of their knowledge and skill to the example set by Professor Moir.

The author is of course also his own clinical photographer, and here, too, the same standard of excellence is maintained. One cannot help regretting that only the frontispiece photograph is in colour. What a boon it would be to medical education if pharmaceutical firms and other bodies allied to the medical profession could make more money available for the production of medical text-books. R.P.D.

IMMUNITY

Immunity. By S. Raffel, Sc.D., M.D. 2nd ed. Pp. x + 646. Illustrated. \$10.00. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1961.

This book deals with a subject in which research is extremely active and incorporates many advances of recent publication. Each chapter includes a wealth of carefully tabulated, up-to-date references. In this respect it is a particularly valuable work for those interested in the complex aspects of infection and resistance in the animal body.

The presentation of material is similar to that of the first edition, being divided into 4 sections viz.:

Section I, which discusses the fundamental aspects of immunity and constitutes almost half the text. It describes the mechanisms of parasitism, native immunity, pathogenicity, virulence and acquired immunity.

Section II deals with hypersensitivity in 4 chapters. Immediate and delayed hypersensitivity are described in detail. The latest concepts of hypersensitivity in relation to immunity and other hypersensitive states are outlined.

Section III is a dissertation on the application of the previously outlined mechanisms of immunity to 12 of the more important diseases affecting man.

Section IV describes serology and antigenic systems with a chapter on immunologic disease and on the blood-cell systems.

Most chapters are conveniently summarized, while figures and tables are well produced. There is no author index; however, the subject index is adequate. W.H.H.

UVEITIS

Uveitis and Toxoplasmosis. By E. S. Perkins, Ph.D. (Lond.), M.D. (Lond.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.) Pp. ix + 142. Illustrated. R3.00. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1961.

The author stresses this is not a textbook; part of it was accepted as an M.D. thesis. The scope of the book is to present observations made at the Uveitis Clinic, Institute of Ophthalmology, London.

It deals essentially with statistical analyses of the results of clinical examinations and of a limited number of the more common laboratory investigations usually carried out in these cases. The main objective was to determine the aetiology of uveitis. If one aetiological agent could be shown unequivocally to cause uveitis, it would help to advance knowledge of this disease. This is seemingly achieved, since 75% of acute posterior uveitis cases at this clinic are fairly conclusively shown to be caused by toxoplasmosis.

The second and greater part of the book deals systematically with this disease. A printer's 'gremlin' has found its way into several pages, and there are several statements which provoke criticism, but these are small points in an otherwise interesting thesis.

This book should be read by all ophthalmologists and those physicians and pathologists who have dealings with ophthalmic cases. E.E.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE ONSET OF LABOUR

Progesterone and the Defence Mechanism of Pregnancy. Ciba Foundation Study Group No. 9. Ed. by G. E. W. Wolstenholme, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., M.R.C.P. and M. P. Cameron, M.A. Pp. viii + 108. Illustrated. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1961.

This symposium on the role of progesterone in the defence mechanism of pregnancy, was appropriately held in honour of its discoverer, Dr. George Corner, who also acted as chairman. To the postgraduate student and the practising obstetrician, this book contains much of interest. The ingenious theories of internationally known workers like Csapo and Zander are very ably discussed and criticized by clinicians like Russel, Kellar, Nixon and others. Kuriyama presents some meticulous work on the electro-physiology of the uterus.

This little book is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the physiology of the onset of labour. P.F.M. d. T.