

BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

NEUROSURGICAL APPROACH TO INTRACRANIAL INFECTIONS

The Neuro-Surgical Approach to Intracranial Infections.
By F. J. Irsigler, M.D. Pp. 111. Illustrated. DM 59. Berlin:
Springer Verlag. 1961.

This work, which covers a review of the author's personal experiences between 1940 and 1960, is a welcome addition to the library shelves of the growing number of South African neurosurgeons and neurologists as well as to our colleagues overseas. It is doubly welcome, since it represents one of the

first comprehensive works in neurosurgery published by a South African neurosurgeon.

The best master is personal experience, and the author has been at pains to analyse his well-documented and photographed cases and to discuss the results from a deductive viewpoint.

Intracranial infections have been broadly classified into the rhinogenous class, the convexity class, the otogenous class, metastatic brain abscesses, and fungal infections. Each of these groups is further subdivided. The most valuable part of the work is the author's case histories quoted and tabulated

for ready comparison to illustrate these various subdivisions. Having worked in the eras before and after the introduction of the sulphonamides and antibiotic group of drugs, the author has been able to show how the incidence of infections and the surgical results of treated infections have altered since the introduction of these drugs.

Like Professor Olivecrona, I would have regarded a correlation of brain abscess with electroencephalographic changes as a valuable additional chapter in this book, since the EEG is almost invariably of assistance in this type of lesion.

To those readers who are not well versed in the German neurosurgical literature the book has an additional advantage, since Mr. Irsigler has quoted extensively from this source.

E.M.K.

AUDIOMETRY

Clinical Audiometry. By M. Portmann, M.D. and C. Portmann, M.D. Pp. xxvi + 349. Illustrated. R9.60. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd. 1961.

This is a practical book in which specialists will find the essentials of modern audiology. Sections are devoted to the following aspects:

(i) The principles and the technique of audiometry in the study of deafness and allied phenomena including pure tone, speech, and objective audiometry.

(ii) The diagnostic value of audiometry in the study of the various functional elements of hearing, the disease entities that may affect them, and the control of treatment of these conditions.

(iii) Audiometry in legal and industrial medicine.

(iv) Audiometry in children.

Because of its clarity, conciseness and true clinical approach, this book is to be highly recommended to anyone interested in audiology.

C.J.d.T.

ADIPOSE TISSUE

Adipose Tissue as an Organ. Proceedings of the Deuel Conference on lipids. Ed. by L. W. Kinsell, M.D., D.Sc. Pp. xiv + 278. Illustrated. \$10.75. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1962.

The proceedings of this conference, or rather symposium, include papers and discussions on the morphology of adipose tissue, its composition and metabolic activity, and on the pathological physiology of adipose tissue. R. G. Barnett deals in his contribution particularly with the histochemistry and electron microscopy of fat cells, and produces excellent illustrations. In their articles on the metabolic activity of adipose tissue, F. L. Engel, M. Vaughan and E. D. Korn discuss assimilative functions, lipid-mobilizing functions and some enzymatic aspects. All the papers are very interesting and well supplemented by lively discussions. On the whole the book is well edited, although some erratic spelling of authors' and periodicals' names is slightly disturbing. The price of this volume seems fairly high.

H.W.W.

CANCER

Dissemination of Cancer. Prevention and therapy. By W. H. Cole, M.D., F.A.C.S., G. O. McDonald, M.S., M.D., F.A.C.S., S. S. Roberts, M.S., M.D. and H. W. Southwick, M.D., F.A.C.S. Pp. xi + 462. Illustrated. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1961.

This volume outlines the work of Dr. W. H. Cole and his associates over many years. The first and major portion of the book deals in great detail with the isolated cancer cell, its original detachment from the parent tumour, and its various routes of dissemination throughout the body.

Spread through tissue planes, lymphatic channels and venous routes is described in meticulous detail and illustrated by many clear diagrams.

The chapter on the demonstration of cancer cells in the blood stream is indeed fascinating. The identification of increased showers of circulating cancer cells in the blood

stream, brought about by many simple manoeuvres such as bimanual pelvic examination and skin preparation pre-operatively, is well shown.

As one reads this portion of the book one may well pause and wonder by what miracle any patient with cancer can ever hope for cure. The second part of the book, which deals with various factors which may increase or decrease the host resistance, provides a hopeful approach. To the clinician the present position of tumour immunology appears complicated and the application of this knowledge possibly still rather distant. The whole subject is however of profound speculative interest.

In contrast the measures suggested to reduce and combat the various types of dissemination are simple and clear and should be carefully studied by all who deal with cancer patients.

This is a book which should be carefully studied by surgeons, pathologists, radiotherapists and all who have direct clinical interest in the cancer problem.

M.B.B.

LOCAL MEDICINAL AND POISONOUS PLANTS

The Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of Southern and Eastern Africa. 2nd ed. By J. M. Watt, E.D., M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P.E. and M. G. Breyer-Brandwijk, D.Sc. (W.W.R.), Phil. doct. (Utrecht), Apotheker (Utrecht). Pp. xii + 1457. Illustrated. R25.20. Postage 67c. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1962.

This long-awaited edition exceeds all expectations. The authors deserve the highest praise for this *magnum opus*. It is without equal as a reference work on the medicinal uses, chemical composition, pharmacological effects, and toxicity both for man and animals, of the flora of Southern and Eastern Africa. To modify the criticism once made of another big book: this volume has increased both in girth and in stature. There are now 1,457 pages, more than 300 illustrations (many beautifully in colour), more than 50 tables, and an extensive bibliography extending (in small print) over 51 pages. There is an appendix of the European names of plants, another giving the vernacular names of plants, and there is further an extensive list of active principles. Finally there is an index of 111 pages, with three columns to the page. In other words, the authors have done everything to make it possible to find the available information stored in this enormous encyclopaedia.

Great strides have been made in recent years in the discovery of new drugs, some from plant sources. This book will be a valuable aid to research institutions interested in this field. The toxicity of many plants is a subject of great importance and interest, and the possible steps to reduce this hazard will gain impetus from a study of this book. There is no question, as the authors themselves state, that the medical practitioner, the pharmacist, the missionary, the forensic worker and the scientist will find the book of value in their several spheres.

The publishers must also be congratulated on their contribution to this outstanding scientific publication.

N.S.

RADIOLOGY IN CHILDREN

Pediatric Radiology. By L. A. Davis, M.D. Pp. 180. Illustrated. R7.20. Postage 30c. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co. 1961. Obtainable from Baillière, Tindall & Cox Ltd., London.

This book, which is a reprint of chapter XIV of Ross Golden's *Diagnostic Roentgenology*, maintains the high standard of this work. Each section of the body is dealt with in a concise, workmanlike fashion by the author who is a master of his subject. He has amassed an amazing amount of useful information in the 168 pages of the text.

The illustrations are excellent and greatly add to the value of this work, which makes delightful reading.

Unfortunately there are many spelling errors, but this does not in any way detract from its worth, and this book is thoroughly recommended to all radiologists and paediatricians.

I.O.F.