

BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

OORERFLIKE MIOPATIES

Biochemistry of Hereditary Myopathies. By J.C. Dreyfus, M.D., Ph.D. and G. Schapira, M.D., Ph.D. Pp. xi+146. Illustrated. \$6.25. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1962.

Die toestande wat deur hierdie skrywers behandel word, is seldsaam en die inligting en bespreking is van so 'n aard dat dit grootliks by die chemiese patoloog en die navorser op dié gebied tuis hoort.

Nogtans is dit 'n nuttige bydrae ook vir die algemene internis omdat dit hom ook op oorsigtelike wyse insae gee in die fundamentele sitchemie van spiere en vir hom 'n begrip oordra van die dinamiese stand van spier-proteïen en 'n verduideliking aanbied van die molekulêre grondslag vir spierkontraksie en die energieverbruik van hierdie weefsel.

Die werk handel grootliks oor studies wat uitgevoer was op pasiënte met progressiewe spier-distrofie. Die biochemiese afwykings en die laboratorium hulp tot diagnose word volledig uiteengesit en bespreek. Aandag word ook geskenk aan 'n paar ander oorerflike spier-toestande soos die miotoniese toestande, miopatie as gevolg van 'n gebrek aan fosforilase, kongenitale mioglobienurie en familiële periodieke verlamming.

Dit blyk uit die geheel dat biochemiese navorsing sover verskillende stoornisse in die samestelling van miofibrille en sarkoplasma en mitochondrie kon uitken. Dit het proewe van groot waarde beskikbaar gestel om te help met diagnose, selfs in pre-kliniese diagnose, en selfs vir die opspoor van heterosigotiese draers van die siekte-eienskap. Dit was tot dusver nie moontlik om die presiese biochemiese letsel vas te pen nie en die inligting is nog nie van so 'n aard dat dit van waarde is ten opsigte van behandeling nie.

A.J.B.

FLUID BALANCE

Water, Electrolyte, and Acid-Base Balance. Normal and pathological physiology as a basis for therapy. 2nd ed. By H. F. Weisberg, M.D. Pp. xx + 533. R10.40. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co.; and London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox Ltd. 1962.

This contribution to a difficult subject is not written by an author who wishes to impress his reader with his own abstract knowledge of it, but by a teacher who is determined that one shall understand what this subject is about.

He uses every stratagem to drive his points home—even anecdotes and cartoons are invoked and interspersed among the salient facts and scientific explanations.

This book is a delight to read and can be highly recommended to everybody interested in the subject—from the student who is looking only for fundamentals to the practising physician who will be able to base his therapy on it, and beyond this to the experienced research worker who will find a wealth of scientific detail and more than 1,500 additional references.

A.S.

BONE REMODELLING

Bone Remodelling Dynamics. By H. M. Frost, M.D. Pp. xiii + 175. Illustrated. \$8.50. Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

This is a rather strange book. To quote from the author's preface, it 'presents a specialized view of bone remodelling, emphasis being on dynamic events and on regulation'. He says further, 'the orientation of thought will be difficult to grasp at the first reading'. I agree with this.

This work seems to be of most value to the serious student of the dynamic anatomy and physiology of bone, and in particular of the mechanisms involved. In fact I intend to study it in more detail later and would recommend it to anyone with enough time to think about it. It is nicely produced, and contains a glossary, 12 appendices, and a list of about 50 books which one is recommended to read first.

W.P.U.J.

IMMUNOLOGY

The Integrity of the Body. By F. M. Burnet, F.R.S. Pp. vi + 189. R5.65. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; and Cape Town: Oxford University Press. 1962.

Sir Macfarlane Burnet has that wonderful ability to present simply, clearly and concisely a subject which appears complex in other hands. In this book he describes the modern problems of immunology with a clarity and vividness which will be stimulating and thought-provoking to a wide circle—botanists, geneticists, physicians and microbiologists. He discusses immunity as part of the process by which the structural and functional integrity of complex organisms is maintained. The problems of medical and non-medical applications of immunology and of allergic disease are presented, and in particular the modern concept of the clonal-selection theory of immunity, of which he is the originator.

This absorbing book can be read with enjoyment and considerable profit by undergraduate, graduate and specialist alike.

G.S.

IRON METABOLISM

Clinical Disorders of Iron Metabolism. By E. Beutler, M.D., V. F. Fairbanks, M.D. and J. L. Fahey, M.D. Pp. iv + 267. Illustrated. \$8.75. New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1963.

This is a sound, short account of the metabolism of iron, and of the clinical disorders of deficiency and overload. It is clearly and concisely written and well-documented, and the authors handle controversial issues competently.

South African readers would want a fuller review of the problem of siderosis, for it is still unresolved whether this is a disease entity or an incidental finding; and those interested in the history of medicine might be disappointed in the short introductory chapter. These are minor criticisms, however, detracting little from the usefulness of this well-written monograph.

E.B.A.

HARE-LIPS

Hare-Lips and their Treatment. By A. B. LeMesurier, M.D., F.R.C.S. (Canada). Pp. vii + 169. Illustrated. R5.60. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co.; and London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1962.

In surgery, as in life, experience is the factor which enables a person to bring to fruition and perfect a fresh approach to some old and much discussed problem. No man could be more fortunately placed to comment on the repair of hare-lips than Mr. LeMesurier, who has performed or supervised over 1,000 of these operations in the 20 years from 1939 to 1958.

Here is the quintessence of his experience, and whatever may be one's personal approach to the problem of hare-lips, this book will repay careful study. A *sine qua non* for all plastic surgeons and recommended reading for other practitioners who may be forced to repair this defect.

D.D.

HEADACHE

The Common Headache Syndromes. Biochemistry, pathophysiology, therapy. By A. M. Ostfeld, M.D. Pp. xiii + 86. Illustrated. \$4.50. Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1962.

This is an excellent little book which has been based on the author's attempts to determine the place of a vasoconstrictor (norepinephrine) in the treatment of vascular headaches. But it is much more than a monograph about a mere experiment: the author is critical of his own results and gives a clear account of some of the difficulties encountered in drug trials. At the same time he gives a very concise and well-documented review of most of the problems concerned with headaches today. Every medical practitioner would benefit by reading this short booklet, be he specialist, GP, or lowly neurologist.

J.M.M.