

## MODERN FIRST AID

*Modern First Aid and Accident Prevention.* By Chirurgicus. Pp. 144. Illustrated. 70c. Printed by Cape & Transvaal Printers and distributed by Central News Agency. 1963.

The need for a *modern* First Aid Manual has been felt for a long time, and the mounting toll of accidents in the streets and elsewhere has made it imperative that as many persons as possible are familiar with first aid methods.

The author, by reason of his practice, is fully aware of the deleterious effects of lack of adequate attention immediately following accidents, and he has set out to make first aid something which is based on commonsense and readily understandable. In his task he has been assisted by a number of specialists in their fields. The result is outstanding. In his foreword, Prof. Jannie Louw, of the Department of Surgery of the University of Cape Town, writes: "The 'Do's' and 'Dont's' are emphasized in such a way that many lives will be saved by those who have studied the manual'.

*Modern First Aid and Accident Prevention*, with its Afrikaans co-edition *Moderne Eerstehulp en Voorkoming van Ongelukke* are different to the usual methods of first aid in that they include numerous references and hints in the matter of accident prevention. The book is written in simple non-technical language and is readily understood. Its aim is to supplement the excellent manuals issued by St. John's, the Red Cross and Noodhulppliga.

It has been accepted by the Boy Scouts of South Africa as the basis of their teaching in first aid and the Medical Association of South Africa has unhesitatingly given its approval to this valuable manual.

The author has decided that all the proceeds from the sale of this book shall be devoted to the work of the National Council for the Care of Cripples. A.H.T.

## RADIODERMATITIS

*Radiodermatitis.* By E. Epstein, M.D. Pp. xvii + 178. Illustrated. \$7.75. Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1962.

This small volume apparently sets out to allay the anxieties of those with little or no knowledge of ionizing radiations and to establish that the expected benefits of properly conducted radiological procedures (both diagnostic and therapeutic) outweigh the hazards.

The mixing of material relating to patients treated for both benign and malignant conditions, to occupational hazards and to the hazards of nuclear warfare is confusing.

Illustrations of deep ulceration over the sacrum and lower abdomen acquired during X-ray treatment for carcinoma of the cervix suggest that this might be the expected degree of

reaction. In my experience such a degree of damage is rarely seen, and will do nothing to reassure medical colleagues of the safety of properly administered radiations.

There is much in this volume with which the experienced radiotherapist will disagree, and not least the 'blurb' on the cover, which claims that radiodermatitis is 'not highly malignant, is preventable and easily diagnosed and is *reversible*'. M.B.B.

## CLINICAL MEDICINE

*Bedside Medicine.* Selected topics. By E. Ask-Upmark, M.D. Pp. 253. Illustrated. Sw.Kr. 56. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell. 1963.

Ask-Upmark is Professor of Medicine at Uppsala. He is one of the old-type physicians who has made careful—and some original—observations at the bedside. While not denying the value of laboratory methods he stresses the fact that the important approach to medicine is the study of the patient himself. He has chosen 23 subjects, altogether unrelated, for discussion.

The first chapter—'The customer is always right'—emphasizes the importance of a careful history. One was surprised, therefore, when in the chapter on 'weight loss' two cases, one of a foreign body in the oesophagus and the other of myasthenia gravis (with easy fatigue of chewing), were not recognized from the history.

In the chapter on 'Posture', in which he has many interesting observations to make, he suggests that the cause of nocturnal leg cramps is the draining away, in the horizontal position, during the night of oedema fluid (not necessarily obvious) from the legs, which had accumulated during the day. He proposes raising the head of the bed to prevent this. He has a paragraph strongly in favour of the rocking chair! In the chapter on 'The foot' he has this to say on leg-vein thrombosis: 'The plantar venous basin is the Sargasso Sea—where the eels of thrombosis are born'. He often finds tenderness of the soles in these cases, early.

His English is frequently foreign: sibsters for siblings; explication for explanation; familiar for familial, etc. He speaks of the inoculation of a pacemaker in cases of heart-block, and of an extremely sensible carotid sinus. There is no excuse for 'Chroner's disease' and 'Meigh's syndrome'. He is in error when he says that the polypi of Peutz-Jegher's disease are prone to become malignant—they are hamartomata and not adenomata. It is wrong to speak of the paroxysmal cold agglutination of Landsteiner.

But these are minor blemishes. This is a book that is 'different', as Parkes Weber's were different in their way, and can be read with great interest. F.F.