

SURVEY OF GASTRO-INTESTINAL DISEASE

Diseases of the Alimentary Tract. By C. F. Hawkins, M.D., F.R.C.P. Pp. xiii + 411. Illustrated, R6.00. London: William Heinemann Medical Books. 1963.

This book provides a comprehensive and up-to-date survey of gastro-intestinal disease. Symptoms, diseases and the newer diagnostic techniques are discussed and functional gastro-intestinal disorders briefly presented. The chapters on small bowel and large bowel diseases are particularly authoritative and those dealing with miscellaneous gastro-intestinal problems and disorders most informative. I agree with the author's scepticism regarding 'chronic appendicitis' and his attitude towards the place of medical treatment in the management of gastric ulceration, and even surgeons would probably agree that surgery should be avoided in patients with radiological evidence of dilatation and overt peristaltic activity of the duodenum. The book is well written and easily readable, and should benefit undergraduates and postgraduates alike.

I.N.M.

AGEING OF ORGANS

Lectures on Experimental Gerontology. By F. Verzár, M.D. Pp. xvi + 128. Illustrated. \$5.75. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

This small manual groups histological and biochemical data on ageing of various organs and structures. Its value is limited by the presence of an author index without a detailed subject index. It contains several items of interest, for example, a statement that the excretion of 17-ketosteroids decreases to about one-third after the age of 70. Other major abnormalities of old age, for example, senile osteoporosis, are not particularly stressed or discussed.

M.H.

YEARBOOK OF ENDOCRINOLOGY

The Year Book of Endocrinology (1962-1963 Year Book Series). Ed. by G. S. Gordan, M.D., Ph.D., F.A.C.P. Pp. 411. Illustrated. \$8.00. Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1963.

Every year one of the more pleasing experiences is reading the *Year Book of Endocrinology*. The field is becoming so vast that it is hardly possible to keep abreast of the literature of even single glands, let alone the whole orchestra!

This issue well fulfils its purpose of keeping the general (or even the specialist) endocrinologist up-to-date with what important observations have been made in the previous year. The extracts are chosen with care, and the book livened with frequent witty footnotes by the distinguished editor.

As I have suggested before, surely it is time that this year-book were divided into 2 parts: (1) diabetes and thyroid disease, and (2) other endocrine disease? There is now ample need for such a split.

G.D.C.

KNEE INJURIES

The Management of Internal Derangements of the Knee. By A. J. Helfet, B.Sc. (Cape Town), M.D., M.Ch. Orth. (Liverpool), F.R.C.S. Pp. xiv + 230. Illustrated, R9.00. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.; and London: Pitman Medical Publishing Co. 1963.

The author states in his preface 'while there are a number of comprehensive contemporary volumes devoted to the knee joint, this monograph is written in an endeavour to project certain features of the diagnosis and treatment of injuries of the knee joint into the third plane': the third plane alluded to is the helical course traversed by the tibia on the condyles of the femur. Prof. Helfet has written variously on the subject in the past and the monograph is the outcome of the collation and expansion of his papers. He repeatedly stresses the lack of complete rotation of the tibia in traumatic lesions of the meniscus and the prominence of the medial femoral condyle in medial meniscal tears. The absence of any physical signs in the presence of a 'good' history, which may be encountered from time to time, is not mentioned at all.

In the analysis of his personal series, which merits better display, we find a surprisingly large percentage of anterior horn tears especially in the lateral meniscus group—71.8%. The author writes eloquently in favour of his conviction that 'most traumatic arthritis of the knee in middle-aged and elderly people is due to minor derangements of the menisci'. It is gratifying to note the importance Prof. Helfet places on accuracy of diagnosis and gentleness of technique in the management of internal derangements, as these two aspects are a *sine qua non* for good end-results.

The book is profusely illustrated with numerous, clear, line-drawings and many 'at operation' photographs. The very excellence of these 'close-ups' detracts from their usefulness in some instances, because the magnification causes difficulty in interpretation. Possibly in future editions some of these may have accompanying line-drawings to make it easier for the uninitiated. Apart from a few minor spelling errors, the book is well produced, with clear print, and a bibliography at the end of each chapter.

M.S.

TREATMENT OF BURNS

A Practical Manual for the Treatment of Burns. By E. R. Crews, M.D., M.S. Pp. xiii + 119. \$6.75. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1964.

The author is to be congratulated on the simple and 'down to earth' approach of the multifaceted, complex aspects of burns. The general treatment, problems encountered in both early and later treatment, nutrition, skin grafting and nursing care, in adults as well as in children, are expertly dealt with. The recommended forms of treatment are adequately and logically explained.

26 September 1964

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This beautifully-produced book is highly recommended to surgical residents, medical practitioners, and surgeons as well as nurses, who may not only acquaint themselves with the

major points of treatment, but also recognize and confront intelligently the many other problems that may arise during the course of treatment.

S.C.