

BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

YEARBOOK OF ORTHOPAEDICS

The Year Book of Orthopaedics and Traumatic Surgery (1962-1963 Year Book Series). Ed. by H. H. Young, M.D. Pp. 445. Illustrated. \$9.00. Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1963.

This volume, like its predecessors, affords wide coverage for the year's orthopaedic events. As might have been anticipated, 'thalidomide babies' and their orthopaedic problems have been included.

The treatment of burns has been widely reviewed and as yet no finality has been reached on the 'best treatment'. Several new appliances are mentioned, and in particular an 'inflatable emergency splint'. This type of splinting has a great potential and it remains to be seen whether its early promise will be fulfilled.

Our thanks are due to the editor and his assistants for the material selected and its excellent abstraction. We can highly recommend this volume to all those interested. A.S.

INTRODUCTION TO GENETICS

An Introduction to Medical Genetics. 3rd ed. By J.A.F. Roberts, M.A., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. Pp. xiii + 283. Illustrated. R3.50 London and Cape Town: Oxford University Press. 1963.

Genetics has come to assume the dimensions of an additional basic science in modern medicine. Advances in this field in the last decade have been quite unparalleled and have brought with them the necessity for learning a new language and acquiring a new way of thinking. Fraser Roberts' introduction meets these demands admirably. For the layman in genetics, whether he be physician or medical student, here is the ideal book. A simple, yet comprehensive, coverage of basic principles is made, complimented by lucid examples and diagrams and emphasizing at all times the medico-clinical aspects. In the current edition, a chapter is devoted to cytogenetics. Recent advances in the genetics of blood groups and in biochemical genetics are included. I.F.A.

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORICAL MEDICINE

The Fundamental Ideas of Medicine. A brief history of medicine. By J. F. A. McManus, M.D. Pp. vii + 115. Illustrated. \$4.75. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

A new and unique monograph of the history of medicine through a description of the 'fundamental ideas of medicine' rather than through the more usual historical approach of the lives of the men and the contributions they made. It deals with the 'pre-suppositions' on which modern medicine has developed and traces the ways in which modern diagnosis and treatment have evolved through a consideration and description of the 'basic ideas in medicine'. The monograph offers a philosophical approach to the medical historian and should be of great interest, not only to medical workers, but to non-medical workers in the field of historical medical research. C.A.

INHERITED SKIN CONDITIONS

Clinical Genodermatology. By T. Butterworth, A. B., M.D., Med.Sc.M. and L. P. Streat, D.D.S., M.Sc., Ph.D., F.A.P.H.A., F.A.A.S. Pp. xxi + 221. Illustrated. R10.80. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins; and London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1963.

This volume on inherited skin conditions is brief, profusely illustrated, and written in an easy-flowing conversational style. It is an unequalled first port of call for the English reader who is looking for information which lies just outside the range of textbooks. For the physician, dermatologist or paediatrician who has no special knowledge or interest in the anomalies and syndromes affecting the skin, the book is admirable. It has no pretensions towards profundity, comprehensiveness or originality, and is therefore a work of competence rather than excellence. G.H.F.

CONFERENCE ON CONGENITAL DEFECTS

First Inter-American Conference on Congenital Defects. Papers and discussions presented at the First Inter-American Conference on Congenital Defects, Los Angeles, California, 22-24 January 1962. Compiled and edited for The International Medical Congress, Ltd. Pp. xiii + 261. Illustrated. R6.00. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.; and London: Pitman Medical Publishers. 1963.

This volume makes interesting and informative reading especially for paediatricians. The papers include sections on structural and genetic defects, and a variety of clinical presentations. The introductory remarks by Linus Pauling stress the widening field of molecular concepts in genetic defects. An excellent review of abnormal haemoglobins, sex chromosome abnormalities and the pathogenesis of spina bifida and hydrocephalus is included.

This handsome volume is perhaps a bit expensive for the average pocket. R.C.

DISCOVERERS OF BLOOD CIRCULATION

Discoverers of Blood Circulation. From Aristotle to the times of Da Vinci and Harvey. By T. Doby, M.D. Pp. 285. Illustrated. R3.00. London and New York: Abelard-Schuman Ltd. 1963.

A fascinating historical survey of the men who sought to explain the basis of our knowledge of the blood circulation, told in a manner which makes easy and intensely interesting reading.

It is an authoritative treatise of the work of these great masters of medicine, coupled with the stories of their personalities, their lives and the conditions under which they lived and worked, and makes a most absorbing book. Apart from the bibliography and the introduction of well-documented reference charts, there are over fifty new and original prints and drawings. This book will serve as an inspiration to all who work in the sciences of experimental physiology and experimental medicine, and must find a place in the library of the physiologist, anatomist and clinician. C.A.

PRIMER OF DERMATOLOGY

A Primer of Skin Diseases for Physicians and Students. By T. W. Baer, M.D. Pp. xii + 105. \$5.75. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

The author, in his introduction, quite rightly stresses the fact that dermatology, like many other specialties, is assigned a minor role in the medical school curriculum, and he tries to remedy this defect by introducing bed-side regional instruction to students and physicians in as simple a manner as possible.

The bulk of the dermatoses mentioned are dealt with very superficially, and could be of no practical use to a busy general practitioner. Furthermore, I cannot agree that since skin diseases are seldom at rest, picture illustrations are of little value to the student. In spite of the author's obvious desire to aid the student in dermatology, I feel he has not given us enough material to be of any great benefit for teaching purposes.

This book, in my opinion, falls far short of recent publications of a similar nature. R.L.

YEARBOOK OF PSYCHIATRY

The Year Book of Neurology, Psychiatry and Neurosurgery. (1962-1963 Year Book Series.) Ed. by R. P. Mackay, M.D., S. B. Wortis, M.D. and O. Sugar, M.D. Pp. 631. Illustrated. \$10.00. Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1963.

The annual appearance of this yearbook is always the occasion for a stimulating few hours catching up with what one has missed in the literature during the year; in addition, the yearbook provides a useful standing reference for future years. Most of the important work of 1962 is reviewed in its pages, and it gives a good running account of the main currents (and the interesting side channels) in psychiatry, neurology and neurosurgery during the year. L.S.G.