

BOEKBESPREKINGS : BOOK REVIEWS

CANCER ANTIBIOTIC

Biotherapy of Malignant Tumours. By N. G. Klyuyeva and G. I. Roskin. Pp. ix + 315. Illustrated. R8.00. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1963.

This book is a translation from the Russian original, first published in 1957, which reported a quarter of a century's work in the search for and the possible finding of a cancer antibiotic. The agent reported upon is an extract from *Trypanosoma cruzi*, which is claimed to be harmless to normal tissue but selectively active against human malignant tumours.

The first part of the book deals with the search for the substance, and subsequent sections with considerations of possible methods of action of the agent and reports of its use in human cancer. These do not unfortunately cover all cases treated, and include lesions such as fibroadenoma of the breast which are not admissible. In spite of these defects and the combination of the preparation with other methods of treatment, such as local excision, there do seem to have been some cases which improved while on treatment.

It is a pity that this book is so diffuse and that details of the preparation (which has been used in several other parts of the world) are not given. As with so many possible cancer cures, properly designed clinical trials are essential, and these are unfortunately lacking.

R.S.

PAEDIATRIC SURGERY

Congenital Malformations of the Rectum, Anus and Genito-Urinary Tracts. By F. D. Stephens, D.S.O., M.S.(Melb.). F.R.A.C.S. Pp. xvi + 371. Illustrated. R6.30. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963.

Superlatives have come to be associated with American films and are very rarely applied to literature, especially of a scientific or technical nature. This book, however, is a must: it should be in the library of every hospital or medical school associated with the treatment and teaching of surgery of infants and childhood. No paediatric surgeon should be without it, be he interested in urology or such simple problems as that of an inguinal hernia. More especially it rationalizes and standardizes the vexed problem of ano-rectal anomalies: order has been created out of chaos. Mr. Stephens and his colleagues are pioneers, and are to be congratulated on this valuable addition to the literature of paediatric surgery.

J.H.L.

RENAL HYPERTENSION

Renovascular Hypertension. By T. A. Stamey, M.D. Pp. xi + 232. Illustrated. R11.60. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co.; and London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox Ltd. 1963.

Professor Stamey supports the thesis that the single invariable characteristic of renal ischaemia is excessive reabsorption of sodium and water: and that the cause is occlusive disease of the renal arteries which produces a reduction of renal plasma flow.

Meticulous case histories, well illustrated with graphs, radiographs and photographs, together with details of the conduct of all special investigations, combine to make this an intensely well-conceived monograph of the highest quality that must interest all who are concerned with hypertension.

His final cautionary note predicts that the future place of surgery in renal hypertension will be limited to the rare curable young patients with coarctation of renal arteries or fibromuscular hyperplasia, and not to those with atherosclerotic lesions.

I.J.

SKIN CANCER

Tumors of the Skin. A collection of papers presented at the 7th annual Clinical Conference on Cancer, 1962, at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute, Houston, Texas. Pp. 322. Illustrated. \$8.50. Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers, 1964.

The main headings in this symposium on skin tumours are aetiology and epidemiology, diagnosis, and treatment. The standard of the contributions is high and the editing admirable; the taint of the tape-recorder which makes some modern American symposia so objectionable to the reader is absent.

Most of the material is practical, but there are interesting digressions on precarcinomatous dermatoses and systemic cancers, basal-cell naevi and associated abnormalities, and adenoacanthoma.

The section on treatment is best of all; the Texans understand the problems of cancer therapy in a sunny climate and their observations, especially those of Von Essen on the indications for radiation therapy, could be read with profit by dermatologists, surgeons and radiotherapists in South Africa.

J.M.

DIAGNOSERING VAN SISTEMIESE SIEKTES

The Hand as a Mirror of Systemic Disease. By T. J. Berry, M.D., F.A.C.P. Pp. xix + 215. Illustrated. R12.00. Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co.; and Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1963.

Hierdie boek is 'n pragstuk en 'n kunswerk. Die kwaliteit van die band, van die papier, van die tipografie, is alles van die beste en is sprekend van die sorg waarmee die uitgewers hierdie werk opgestel het. Die geheel maak 'n baie mooi indruk op die oog en dit is werklik 'n plesier om te lees of om net na die illustrasies te kyk. Die wit en swart foto's is van 'n gehalte wat 'n mens nog nie in 'n geneeskundige boek gesien het nie en kleurafdrukke sou sekerlik geen verdere bydrae kon maak nie.

Dit is veral verfrissend om in hierdie dae wanneer die geneeskunde so toegespits word op die laboratorium en op 'n statistiese of wiskundige benadering te ondervind dat iemand so doeltreffend kan wys hoe groot die bron van kliniese inligting is wat verkry kan word deur sorgvuldige waarnemings by die pasiënt, en in hierdie geval slegs deur die hand te besigtig. As 'n mens hierdie kuns kan uitbou en beoefen en veral ook gebruik maak van die lesse wat die laboratorium ons leer om die dinge wat deur die oog gesien kan word, beter te verstaan en te interpreteer, beteken dit dat daar vir die pasiënt minder ongemak veroorsaak sal word en dat 'n mens makliker en gouer 'n antwoord kan kry in verband met sy toestand, en beteken dit ook 'n groot besparing op mediese koste.

In hierdie boek word die hand gebruik as 'n spieël waarin die sistemiese siektes gesien kan word en mens verbaas jou om te besef dat jy op hierdie wyse amper die inhoud van 'n handboek in geneeskunde terugvind. Die hand is self 'n laboratorium vol inligting oor die liggaam en sy siektes en ook weerspieël dit die persoon se geestestoestand en persoonlikheid.

Dit is 'n genot om hierdie boek te lees wat met trots op enige boekrak kan verskyn. A.J.B.

PSYCHIATRY FOR UNDERGRADUATES

Psychological Medicine. An introduction to psychiatry. 5th ed. By D. Curran, C.B.E., M.B., F.R.C.P., D.P.M. and M. Partridge, D.M., M.R.C.P., D.P.M. Pp. viii + 427. Illustrated. R3.00. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963.

This is the fifth edition of the well-known primer on psychiatry. Its authors are both practising clinicians and this gives their book a sound and practical feeling. One is impressed by the broad and empiric approach which is clearly the result of extensive and down-to-earth experience. This book should, and doubtless will, be welcomed by undergraduates. They cannot go wrong with it as it covers the field very clearly and adequately. It will also be appreciated by many medical practitioners as well. L.S.G.

PSYCHOGENESIS

Psychogenic Psychoses. A description and follow-up of psychoses following psychological stress. By P. M. Faergeman, M.D. Pp. x + 268. R4.45. London and Durban: Butterworths, 1963.

Dr. Faergeman formulates four general criteria of psychogenic psychoses, elaborated by three psychoanalytically derived insights. The study comprises a follow-up of cases falling into the categories of emotional syndromes, disturbances of consciousness, and paranoid syndromes, for a period of 15-20 years after admission to hospital. In a substantial proportion of the paranoid and emotional cases, strong constitutional and endogenous components were shown, of an order to throw doubt on the hypothesis, but in the syndromes of disturbed consciousness over half of the cases stood up to the concept of psychogenesis.

The work also throws interesting light on many Anglo-American and Continental psychiatric ideologies. L.A.H.

HEPARIN

Heparin. Metabolism, physiology and clinical application. By H. Engelberg, M.D. Pp. ix + 218. Illustrated. \$8.50. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1963.

The author collates the voluminous literature on heparin which has accumulated since its discovery by McLean in 1916. More than half the volume is devoted to chemistry, physiology and metabolism, and includes a highly involved and unduly lengthy chapter on the role of heparin in fat metabolism, whereas by comparison its mechanism of action as an anticoagulant receives but scant attention. Dealing with therapeutic applications, the author is so preoccupied with the relative merits of heparin and the oral anticoagulants, that a critical appraisal of either is lacking, nor are acute arterial thrombosis and embolism discussed. The rationale for the long-term prophylactic use of heparin in atherosclerotic disease is ascribed solely to its fat-clearing action, whereas only passing mention is made of its anti-thrombotic properties, thus virtually ignoring the widely-held thrombogenic theory. Briefly described and of considerable interest are the sundry actions and uses of heparin not pertaining directly to blood coagulation. The extensive bibliography will prove useful to the interested reader, although the inclusion of titles to the references would enhance the value of this monograph. M.M.S.

GENETICS OF BACTERIA

The Genetics of Bacteria and their Viruses. Studies in basic genetics and molecular biology. By W. Hayes, M.B., Sc.D. (Dublin), F.R.C.P.I., D.P.H. Pp. xii + 740. Illustrated. R8.40. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1964.

This is an advanced textbook on the genetics of bacteria and bacteriophages intended for the use of postgraduate workers in microbiological, biochemical and related fields.

The first part of the book is devoted to an introduction to classical genetics which provides the background on which genetic analysis is based. This is followed by a particularly clear account of the physico-chemical mechanisms of heredity. The book as a whole covers a rapidly expanding and fascinating field which the author presents in a most lucid and readable manner. Further understanding of this rather complex subject is facilitated by numerous and well-conceived line-drawings. W.duT.N.

SPLENOMEGALY

Tropical Splenomegaly. By A. K. Basu, M.S.(Cal.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.), F.A.C.S. and B. K. Aikat, M.D.(Path.), D.C.P.(Lond.), Ph.D.(Lond.). Pp. xii + 195. Illustrated. R5.25. London and Durban: Butterworths, 1963.

This is an account of a systematic investigation of a series of 190 cases of chronic splenomegaly seen in Calcutta. The authors attempt to establish aetiology, pathology and pathogenesis in each case, determine the relationship to hepatic disease and evaluate the results of splenectomy or porta-caval shunt procedures. The book includes a section describing animal experiments planned to study the effect of splenomegaly on the structural and functional status of the liver and to ascertain whether induced splenomegaly can modify the effects of a known hepatotoxin.

They have investigated their material thoroughly. Their pathological findings are adequately described and their operative procedures fully discussed and compared. There are interesting observations about the relationship between the degree of portal hypertension and splenic size, haemorrhages and ascites, and the experimental study is stimulating. The style is concise, yet in general clarity is not sacrificed for brevity. One exception to this is seen in the section on the intrasplenic circulation where the authors review the 'open' and 'closed' theories and then very briefly propose a working compromise which is far from clear.

The title is perhaps inappropriate. From it the reader might expect to find evidence of a condition or syndrome seldom observed outside the tropics, yet the authors' own analysis shows that aetiological factors in Calcutta and elsewhere in the world are similar, intrahepatic obstruction constituting by far the largest group and those not adequately explained forming a small minority. The book is well produced, and profusely illustrated. E.B.A.