

SPINAL INJURIES

Injuries of the Spine. By M. B. Howorth, M.D., Med.Sc.D. and J. G. Petrie, M.D. Pp. xvi + 343. Illustrated. R12.00. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins; and London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox Ltd. 1964.

The authors have written a comprehensive textbook and have approached the subject on an anatomical and pathological basis. After a fascinating section on the history of the subject covering the aeons between the Egyptian period and the 20th century, the book is divided into three major sections, viz. cervical spine, thoraco-lumbar spine and neurologic injury.

Each division is approached in an orderly fashion and is profusely illustrated with good quality radiographs; there is an extensive bibliography at the end of each section. The style, in the main, is clear and concise and the 'other man's' point of view is stated often and fairly, despite the authors' vast experience of their subject.

A minor criticism is the detailed description (with illustrations) of four methods of hyperextension treatment of compression fractures with wedge deformity when the authors' predilection is for the approach of non-interference and early mobilization employed in Great Britain and South Africa. Also Figs. 177-179 depict wedge-compression fractures where stability might have been achieved by the anterior bony bridging shown, without additional posterior surgical fusion.

The very fact that so few criticisms have been voiced indicates how extremely well the authors have covered a very difficult and complex field of injuries of the locomotor system. The book should be possessed by all those who practise and teach the surgery of trauma. M.S.

IMMUNOLOGIESE METODEDES

Immunological Methods. A symposium organized by the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences established under the joint auspices of UNESCO & WHO. Ed. by J. F. Ackroyd, D.Sc., M.B., M.R.C.P. Pp. xvi + 628. Illustrated. R8.40. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1964.

Hierdie boek dek 'n wye gebied. Dit is 'n uitstekende inligtingsbron vir enigeen wat met immunologiese metodes werk. In 28 hoofstukke word 'n oorsig gegee oor die mees moderne tegnieke wat toegepas kan word op werk met komplement, properdien, gel-diffusie, konglutinasie, immuno-elektroforese, kromatografie, radioaktiewe markering van teenliggaampies, weefselkulture en oorplantings-eksperimente, om slegs 'n paar van die onderwerpe te noem. Elke hoofstuk is 'n voordrag gelewer op 'n simposium, en word gevolg deur 'n bespreking en literatuurverwysings. Die boek bevat 'n groot hoeveelheid van tabelle en swart-en-wit beelde van goeie kwaliteit op 34 plate. 'n Goeie verwysingsregister stel die leser in staat om hom vinnig te oriënteer.

Die boek is 'n waardevolle hulpmiddel vir mikrobioloë en ander werkers op die gebied van immunologie. H.D.B.

MEDICAL THERAPY

Modern Treatment, Vol. 1, No. 1. Treatment of renal disease—ed. by E. L. Becker, M.D.; and Treatment of thyroid disease—ed. by E. A. Carr, jnr., M.D. Pp. 228. Illustrated. Bimonthly publication, subscription \$16.00 per year. New York: Hoeber Medical Division, Harper & Row Publishers. 1964.

This is the first in a series of bi-monthly symposia on medical therapy, that are planned by the publishers. On the whole the

articles are aimed at the practitioner but, in many cases (particularly in the chapters on the treatment of renal disease) the level of investigation required is beyond the reach of a general practice and specialized hospital handling is clearly indicated. The majority of contributions are excellent, with concise statements of the problems and how to deal with them; the chapter on thyrotoxicosis stands out among these. Unfortunately, one or two papers are sketchy and the recommended treatment is not always universally acceptable. In general, however, these volumes should serve a valuable purpose in summarizing modern-day concepts in the therapy of common diseases.

R.H.

HISTOLOGY

Human Histology. By B. Cruickshank, M.D., Ph.D.(Ed.), M.R.C.P.(Glasg.), M.C.Path., T. C. Dodds, F.I.M.L.T., F.I.B.P., F.R.P.S. and D. L. Gardner, M.A.(Cantab.), M.D., Ph.D.(Ed.), F.R.C.P.E., M.C.Path. Pp. vii + 268. Illustrated. R7.00. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964.

'The purpose of this book is to provide the medical student with a concise but fully illustrated account of normal human histology. Many medical students begin their clinical studies with an incomplete knowledge of the microscopic structure of human tissues. This is in part the result of the small proportion of good illustrations of human tissue sections in most textbooks of histology, the limitations of which are accentuated by the reproduction of drawings handed down through generations of teachers, by the frequent use of black and white photographs, and by the choice of animal material. With this purpose in mind, animal tissues have been entirely avoided. All illustrations are from unretouched colour photomicrographs.'

These sentences are part of the preface and there is but little to be added to them. The text is short, but not too short. This book teaches the student histology by illustrating it. I have rarely seen a book on histology with such excellent illustrations. The authors are to be congratulated on the result of their efforts, as are the publishers on the production of this book which is well worth its price. H.W.W.

THYROID GLAND

The Thyroid Gland. Vols. I & II. Ed. by R. Pitt-Rivers, Ph.D.(Lond.), F.R.S. and W. R. Trotter, D.M., F.R.C.P. Pp. xi + 442 and xi + 325. Illustrated. R10.17 (Vol. I) and R7.90 (Vol. II)—or R17.20 per set. London and Durban: Butterworths. 1964.

These volumes contain a remarkable series of authoritative dissertations by most of the world's leading specialists in this field. The first volume is concerned mainly with the physiology of the thyroid gland and covers its embryology, morphology (including some beautiful electron-microscope illustrations of fine structure), and detailed considerations of the function of the thyroid gland and the actions of its hormones. It concludes with a chapter on the diagnostic, research and therapeutic applications of radioactive isotopes of iodine, admirably summing up the present status. Volume 2 covers clinical aspects of thyroid disease in an equally comprehensive manner. In general, therapy is not considered—a chapter on the therapeutic approach to thyroid cancer, for instance, would have been valuable, and the treatment of hyperthyroidism is rather scantily reviewed. It is clear that these volumes are not aimed at the general physician; but for those who take a specialized interest in this gland these books will be invaluable. R.H.

LUNG HAEMODYNAMICS

The Pathology of the Pulmonary Vasculature. By C. A. Wagenvoort, M.D., D. Heath, M.D., Ph.D., M.R.C.P. and J. E. Edwards, M.D. Pp. xiii + 494. Illustrated. \$25.50. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1964.

Since the cardiac catheter has been used to study the pulmonary circulation, a vast amount of data has accumulated on lung haemodynamics. This has been collected, digested and presented in a superb volume by the authorities from Amsterdam, Birmingham and Minneapolis. Normal structure and function, and especially disturbances of vascular flow and anatomy, are discussed in detail. Methods of investigating vascular morphology and the hypertensions, which are of such importance in the prognosis and pre-operative assessment of congenital heart disease, are most valuable. The different types of pulmonary embolism and vascular changes in diseases of the lung, as well as neoplasms, are of great interest. To all pathologists, physicians and surgeons interested in pulmonary physiology and pathology, this work will become indispensable.

The liberal illustrations are exemplary, the format impressive, the references up-to-date at the end of each chapter and the style not overpowering. In fact, a most creditable contribution.

G.S.M.B.

LABORATORY PROCEDURES

Techniques in Chemical Pathology. By G. A. Cheyne, F.I.M.L.T. Pp. 397. Illustrated. R4.20. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1964.

In this book Mr. Cheyne has succeeded in providing the medical technologist in chemical pathology with a practical guide to reliable and proven routine laboratory procedures. It is also gratifying to note that the author does not neglect important fundamental considerations such as volumetric, gravimetric and titrimetric analyses; principles and applications of fluorometry, colorimetry and spectrophotometry; the handling of radioactive isotopes and instrumentation in the laboratory. These are often omitted from the text of otherwise comprehensive volumes.

The methods are generally well-chosen and should cover most of the estimations usually performed in the busy routine laboratory. A short description of the principles involved and the interpretation of results is given with each method.

A small irritation is the unusual number of spelling mistakes (probably typographical), which occur. One further criticism is the fact that methods of quality control of results are not considered. Nevertheless, this book should fill a notable gap in the range of textbooks available to the laboratory technician.

G.M.P.