

## BOEKBESPREKINGS : BOOK REVIEWS

### ULCERATIVE COLITIS

*Chronic Ulcerative Colitis.* A lifelong study. By J. A. Bargen, M.D. Pp. xi + 123. Illustrated. \$7.50. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1969.

Dr Bargen has probably seen more patients with ulcerative colitis than any other physician in the history of medicine. This monograph is not a statistical study but rather a record of his assimilated thoughts which represent a lifelong personal study of over 5,000 patients with the disease. The aetiology, incidence, pathology, diagnosis, complications and differential diagnosis of the disease are discussed succinctly and coherently and each category is highlighted by a pointed illustrative case report or photographs. The author abhors a rule of thumb approach to treatment and stresses that therapy must be judged according to the natural history of the disease in the individual patient. The vexing problem of colonic carcinoma complicating ulcerative colitis (the author being the first to establish the association) is handled masterfully and he gives good reasons for his aphorism that 'at best an ileostomy is the calculated substitution of the lesser for the greater evil'.

The book is no more than two nights' reading and every minute will be well spent by physicians, surgeons and students alike.

S.B.

### OBESITY

*Obesity and its Management.* By D. Craddock, M.D., M.R.C.G.P., D.R.C.O.G. Pp. ix + 190. £1.6.6. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1969.

This is indeed a fine, well-balanced book by a general practitioner for general practitioners, and I hope it becomes popular. The chapter on drug treatment is particularly good and sensible, and I much appreciated the few aphorisms under 'Prognosis'. 'Intractable obesity' is also good, although it is not clear that this is really a separate entity (all obesity is intractable, only some obesity is more intractable than others).

The chapter on dieting was a little disappointing but useful in briefly outlining the various acceptable (non-crank) dietary programmes, without any real analysis of merits or demerits.

It is splendid that the author should attempt to draw conclusions from his own experience, but he is a little non-critical of this. For instance, I doubt whether his deductions in the chapter on pregnancy would stand up to statistical analysis.

There are a few spelling errors here and there which should be corrected, e.g. sorbital. On balance, however, this is an excellent book for the non-expert, with plenty of references.

W.P.U.J.