

Boekbesprekings : Book Reviews

MEDICO-LEGAL GUIDE

A Practical Medico-legal Guide for the Physician. By Everett J. Gordon, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.I.C.S. Pp. xvi + 340. \$10.95. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1973.

Contact with some legal process is an inescapable part of a physician's life and we are told that this book is 'an effort to improve his role as a medical witness'. It is geared, however, for the physician with a large plaintiff practice in America. But the sections on detailed methods of examination, the importance of objective conclusions and behaviour under cross-examination, do have relevance for any physician elsewhere. As a practical guide it is somewhat superficial in dealing with the complexities of a medico-legal situation, although the book's maxim that 'an impartial medical opinion carries weight' and the numerous illustrations, are of some merit.

N.G.

BONE DISEASES

Intrinsic Diseases of Bones. Ed. by H. J. Kaufmann. Pp. 561. Illustrated. £27.20. Basel and London: S. Karger, 1973. This is the 4th book in this series. The major criticisms are—it is too long (561 pages) and therefore too expensive (£27.20). There is a lack of cohesion from the multiplicity of authors, there are 51 contributors and some chapters become repetitive. Many intrinsic disorders of bone in infants and children involve dwarfism and this could be presented more compactly. The illustrations are superb, the chapters on genetics informative, and that on the mucopolysaccharidoses excellent. The book contains much information, indigestible however to those who do not have prior knowledge of the subject. There are speculations on many of the problems, and those on achondroplasia are interesting. However, at this price the book can only appeal to connoisseurs or reference institutes rather than ordinary radiologists who rarely meet these problems. It is a valuable book and, although it may not make diagnosis any easier, it will give some understanding to the problems.

B.J.C.

ENT DISEASES

Neurology of Ear, Nose and Throat Diseases. By C. H. Edwards, F.R.C.P. Pp. vii + 304. R12.00. London and Durban: Butterworths, 1973.

Otolaryngology and neurology share many common problems. In otolaryngology we have been acutely aware of our inadequate knowledge of neurology and the lack of a suitable reference book to fill this gap at least temporarily. It is thus fortunate that the author, interested and knowledgeable in our speciality, made available a concise but comprehensive reference book dealing specifically with the neurological aspects of such common complaints as headache and referred pain in the head and neck, complications of bacterial infection, disturbance of balance and movement, facial paralysis, tinnitus, disorders of taste and smell, as well as disorders of speech. Whereas the surgeon will not agree with all the views, he will certainly be stimulated to think again.

This is thus a highly recommended book for specialists as well as students.

C.N.d.T.

SLEEP

Sleep. Physiology, biochemistry, psychology, pharmacology, clinical implications. Proceedings of the First European Congress on Sleep Research, Basel, October 1972. Ed. by W. P. Koella and P. Levin. Pp. xvi + 611. Illustrated. £26.40. Basel and London: S. Karger, 1973.

Little attention has been paid to hypnology until comparatively recently. Standard textbooks on physiology spare a few sentences to it and textbooks of medicine describe a few rare syndromes. The papers collected in this book cover a wide area of basic research and some clinical implications. A holistic picture, however, never emerges: ideas presented at a congress are like a pile of bricks from which a house has yet to be built.

Sleep is for the researcher and those who have a special interest—the rest of us must slumber a while till the jig-saw is complete.

I.F.A.

PRINCIPLES OF OTOMETRY

Basic Principles of Otometry. By J. A. Victoreen, L.I.D. Pp. xiii + 218. \$11.75. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1973.

This book sets out to describe a scientific method to achieve the best possible prosthetic hearing enhancement for the hard of hearing. The author presents the ways and means of properly evaluating hearing aid performance on hearing-impaired individuals—this procedure he terms otometry.

Otometric measurement establishes what sound pressures best re-establish loudness versus sound pressure relationships at various frequencies and state them by number. Such specification becomes a prescription for a hearing instrument to be used.

This book deserves close attention by practising otologists and residents in training and, one hopes, dispensers of hearing aids. The unscientific and haphazard approach to the sale of hearing instruments in this country is sorely in need of control by legislation and Medical Council.

E.K.

TEXTBOOK OF PAEDIATRICS

Textbook of Paediatrics. Ed. by J. O. Forfar, M.C., B.Sc., M.D., F.R.C.P. (Edin.), D.C.H. and G. C. Arneil, M.D., Ph.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.P. (Edin.), F.R.C.P. (Glasg.) D.C.H. Pp. xvi + 2115. Illustrated. £19.50. Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone, 1973.

This is an excellent general textbook of paediatrics and each section contains references to enable the student to elaborate on any particular aspect. The illustrations especially in the X-ray section, are very well produced and set out. There are over 2000 pages and this reflects the immense advances in paediatrics since before the War when general textbooks were sometimes under 500 pages. This book can be highly recommended to students both under- and postgraduate as a comprehensive book of reference.

P.V.S.

DIE STILLE EPIDEMIE

Die Stille Epidemie (The Silent Epidemic). Gered. deur H. L. P. Ackermann. Pp. 26. Geïllustreer. Kaapstad: Mediese Vereniging van Suid-Afrika, 1973. Gratis beskikbaar. Sluit 'n 4c-posseël in en skryf aan Leke-publikasies, S.-A. Mediese Tydskrif, Posbus 643, Kaapstad.

Hierdie tweetalige boekie is 'n verdere uitgawe in die reeks van Lekepublikasies beskikbaar gestel deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Mediese Vereniging. Dit handel oor geslagsiektes en is spesifiek saamgestel met die oog op voorligting aan die publiek oor die simptome en tekens van sifilis en gonoree. Uiteraard is dit enigsins alarmisties in styl, maar afgesien van die stelling dat 'een uit elke tien persone wat 'n geslagsiekte opdoen en nie behandel word nie, sal sterf' (bladsy 3) is daar min kritiek teen in te bring, en vervul dit sekerlik aan 'n dringende behoefte. Die boekie verskyn op 'n baie tydige tydskrif en hoort beslis in die wagkamer van elke geneesheer.

T.H.

CONNECTIVE TISSUE DISORDERS

Heritable Disorders of Connective Tissue. 4th ed. By V. A. McKusick. Pp. xv + 878. Illustrated. \$34.15. Toronto, Ontario: C. V. Mosby, 1972.

The heritable disorders of connective tissue are a group of uncommon but clinically important conditions. A wide variety of potential complications may concern virtually every special-ised branch of medicine.

The 4th edition of Victor McKusick's classical monograph represents a masterly and comprehensive account of these entities. Beautifully printed and copiously illustrated, the work contains a wealth of up-to-date clinical, pathological and genetic information. The monograph is pre-eminent in its field and it is worthy of a place in every medical library.

P.B.