

Boekbesprekings : Book Reviews

THE PALMAR FASCIA

The Palmar Fascia. By H. Graham Stack, F.R.C.S. (Eng.). Pp. vii + 236. Illustrated. £8.00. Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone. 1973. Available from Longman Southern Africa, Paardeneiland, Cape.

The author has made a most meticulous and detailed study of the palmar fascia, based on embryological and anatomical material in cadavers, and during dissections of the palm for Dupuytren's contracture in patients. The book contains a 'plates-section', illustrating beautifully cross-sections of the hand of a fetus.

The clinical and surgical application of this mass of anatomical and histological detail, specifically to the treatment of Dupuytren's contracture, is necessarily brief, but will be most useful to the orthopaedic, plastic or hand surgeon who has to do with hand lesions, especially Dupuytren's contracture.

A comprehensive literature review is given, and in a 117-page appendix, 30 historic papers are translated, abstracted and reviewed, including papers by Dupuytren, Astley-Cooper and Wood-Jones.

C.A.R.S.

PRINCIPLES OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Ophthalmology. Principles and concepts. 3rd ed. By F. W. Newell, M.D., M.Sc. (Ophth.) and J. T. Ernest, M.D., Ph.D. Pp. x + 529. Illustrated. \$20.00. Toronto, Ontario: C. V. Mosby. 1974.

This elegant addition to *Ophthalmic Principles & Practice* is a curious mixture of admirable diagrammatic and descriptive anatomy, physiology and pharmacology and indifferent practical ophthalmology. It is too advanced for students and too limited for ophthalmology graduates. The diagrams in the first section are beautifully illustrative of the anatomy, original and impact-making. The photographic reproductions in the practical portion of the book are poor examples and often non-illuminating.

As a book for quick reference it has a certain value, but it falls between a simple teaching manual and a complete reference system.

J.G.L.

CANCER EXPERIMENTS AND CONCEPTS

Cancer. Experiments and concepts. by R. Süß, V. Kinzel and J. D. Scribner. Pp. xx + 285. Illustrated. DM26.50. Berlin: Springer-Verlag. 1973.

Experimental cancer research is a modern interdisciplinary science *par excellence*: pathologists, biochemists, chemotherapists, radiation physicists, virologists, toxicologists and natural-products chemists are working in common to find out what a tumour cell is, how it originates and how to combat it. The authors have presented the cancer problem as a brain-teaser, a challenge for the curious.

This book ought really to be read on holiday, just for enjoyment. It is by no means a definitive textbook supplying extensive reference material. This volume should entice students who are completing their studies in the traditional disciplines.

Seven-eighths of the book consists of discussions on aetiology and carcinogenesis, and these portions are well written and clearly illustrated. The section on chemotherapy is very cursory, but should provide the uninitiated with some useful knowledge.

This book can be recommended as reading to stimulate those interested in the cancer problem.

G.F.

TREATMENT OF BURNS

Burns and Their Treatment. 2nd ed. By I. F. K. Muir, M.B.E., V.R.D., M.B., M.S. (Lond.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.) and T. L. Barclay, M.B. Ch.M. (Edin.), F.R.C.S. (Edin.). Pp. x + 179. Illustrated. £3.50. London: Lloyd-Luke Medical Books. 1974.

This handbook has the triple virtue of being comprehensive, very readable and short and sweet.

The management of burns is fully dealt with in a clear and succinct manner. Chapters are beautifully schemed out and advice and instruction are neatly given, almost in tabular form; a summary and bibliography follow at the end of each chapter. Additional advice is given on the construction of a Burns Unit, but the management of mass burn casualties is briefly and rather inadequately alluded to.

Well printed on quality paper, the book contains many tables and graphs. Illustrations are good and some are in colour.

S.C.

HYPERTHYROIDISM

Thyroid Disease and Muscle Dysfunction. By I. Ramsay, M.D. (Edin.), M.R.C.P. (Lond.), M.R.C.P. (Edin.). Pp. 179. Illustrated. £4.00. London and Johannesburg: William Heinemann Medical Books. 1974.

This attractively produced monograph covers the major muscle abnormalities found in hyperthyroidism, i.e. acute and chronic myopathy, myasthenia gravis and periodic paralysis.

In addition there is a useful chapter on muscle disease associated with hypothyroidism. The book reviews clinical, biochemical and histopathological aspects of these abnormalities, a good balance being struck between personal experience and that culled from the literature. It contains an excellent bibliography. Though this small monograph seems somewhat overpriced, it is an excellent reference text for those interested in thyroid disease and muscle abnormalities, and as such should find its way into every medical library.

B.L.P.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE VISUAL SYSTEM

Handbook of Sensory Physiology. Vol. VII/3. Central Processing of Visual Information Part A. Ed. by R. Jung. Pp. vii + 775. Illustrated. DM 248. Berlin: Springer. 1973.

The *Handbook of Sensory Physiology*, like its subject matter, develops ever greater complexity. Parts 1, 2, and 4 on the 'Physiology of vision' are all massive volumes and Part 3—'Central Processing of Visual Information'—comprises two massive volumes, of which this one (Part A) is devoted to integrative functions and comparative data. It deals with the physiology of the visual system behind the optic nerves and attempts to link sensation with perception. Each chapter is a monograph by a leading experimental scientist, or by a group of such scientists, on a particular aspect of the problem, and the whole work gives very comprehensive coverage of the field. Most of the work described has been performed on mammals. This is not an easy book to read, the meticulous presentation of a mass of information leads, in some chapters, to a rather heavy style, but it presents in condensed form the information from the very extensive literature on the subject. The book should be in every university library and in every centre where visual research is undertaken. It will also be of interest to psychologists.

A.W.S.