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Book Reviews

Abstract

CLINICAL CHEMISTRY IN PRACTICAL MEDICINE, by C. P. Stewart and Sir Derrick Dunlop. Sixth Edition, published by E. & S. Livingstone, Ltd., Edinburgh, 1962. Pp. 359. Price 27s. 6d.

In this latest edition of a well proven and universally accepted textbook, there have been few major changes, reflecting the great popularity of previous editions. The revision has included recent advances insofar as they are significant in clinical medicine.

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BOOK REVIEWS

CLINICAL CHEMISTRY IN PRACTICAL MEDICINE, by C. P. Stewart and Sir Derrick Dunlop. Sixth Edition, published by E. & S. Livingstone, Ltd., Edinburgh, 1962. Pp. 359. Price 27s. 6d.

In this latest edition of a well proven and universally accepted textbook, there have been few major changes, reflecting the great popularity of previous editions. The revision has included recent advances insofar as they are significant in clinical medicine.

The student usually has some difficulty in coming to an understanding of the acid-base balance of the body. This perplexing subject is covered in an extremely lucid and unambiguous chapter. As is ideal, in a subject which is further complicated by the great variety of terminology, the writers make a point of defining all terms which are liable to cause confusion. Thus we are led from clear definitions of an acid and a base to all the irregularities which result from the failure of any one compensatory mechanism.

Used to advantage throughout the volume, this treatment, involving the application of first principles makes the book an excellent introduction to the use of laboratory techniques as an aid to diagnosis. When faced with a difficult case, there can be no better guide to further investigations.

The material added during revision includes a new section on magnesium and its relationship to electrolyte metabolism. The chapter on carbohydrate metabolism is substantially rewritten and contains much new information—in particular on the new hypoglycaemic drugs, the sulphonylureas. Interest in the baffling range of auto-immune disorders is reflected in a short section on the separation of plasma proteins by immuno-electrophoresis. Also, it is re-

freshing to see older terms such as the "carbon dioxide combining power" being replaced by the more convenient system of giving values in milliequivalents per litre. There is a short clear section on the relationship between cholesterol and coronary heart disease. As in previous editions the appendix gives clear instructions for the analyses, which, in the main, are performed in the clinical side-room.

Throughout, the printing and diagrams are of the same high standard as in the previous editions. There can be no doubt that this edition will enjoy the popularity of its predecessors, continuing to be essential reading for students and practitioners.

J.A.R.

THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE. Edited by Sir Stanley Davidson, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.E. Sixth edition. Edinburgh, E. & S. Livingstone. 1962. Pp. xii + 1139. Price 35s.

As the sixth edition in ten years of this famous textbook becomes available, it becomes increasingly difficult to do anything other than enthuse over it, any minor criticisms that one might have being rather niggardly quibbles.

The physical dimensions of the work have once again been maintained at a reasonable level, there being an increase of merely 27 pages over the fifth edition. In spite of this, each chapter bears witness to a thorough review, and it is refreshing in a book of this size to see references to work as recent as 1961. Would that there were as little delay between the writing and publishing of other books!

Obviously, the therapeutic aspects

have benefited most from so recent a revision. However, in every aspect, there seems to be a freshness, when comparing this edition with the previous two. Perhaps this results simply from the reviewer's imagination, helped by the detergent whiteness of the improved quality paper.

As always from Messrs. Livingstone, the printing and binding are of a high standard; the number of slight misprints could be counted on one's fingers, putting to shame many more elaborate and expensive works. Finally, yet again

the price remains unchanged, at a time when that of every other new edition is creeping up a few shillings.

If the above remarks have been largely subjective impressions of the new edition, rather than an objective review of the work as a whole, it is because, in this case, there is no question of whether one should buy the work, but simply of whether one should possess the 6th edition rather than the 5th. I hope the hesitant will have been convinced.

P.J.S.