

RES MEDICA

Journal of the Royal Medical Society



Book Reviews

Abstract

Practical Biochemistry Seventh Edition. H. Zwarenstein and V. E. van der Schyff.
Pp. 106 + x. Edinburgh and London. E. and S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. Price 15s.

Psychology in Relation to Medicine by R. M. Mowbray, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology, University of Glasgow, and T. Ferguson Rodger, Professor of Psychological Medicine, University of Glasgow. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1963. Pp. 399. Illustrated. Price 36s.

Wheeler & Jack's Handbook of Medicine Revised by Robert Coope and C. A. Clarke. 12th Edition. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 22s 6d.

A Synopsis of Surgical Anatomy A. Lee McGregor. Bristol: John Wright. £1 15s.

Electrocardiography by R. W. D. Turner, O.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.P.Ed. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1963. Pp. 155. Illustrated. Price 20s.

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ISSN: 2051-7580 (Online) ISSN: 0482-3206 (Print)

Res Medica is published by the Royal Medical Society, 5/5 Bristo Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9AL

Res Medica, Autumn 1963, 4(1): 35-36

doi: [10.2218/resmedica.v4i1.415](https://doi.org/10.2218/resmedica.v4i1.415)

BOOK REVIEWS

PRACTICAL BIOCHEMISTRY. Seventh Edition.
H. Zwarenstein and V. E. van der Schyff.
Pp. 106 + x. Edinburgh and London. E. and
S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. Price 15s.

This book sets out to provide, in compact form, an aid to biochemical laboratory work: evidently, it is intended for use in conjunction with a larger text and theoretical aspects are therefore cut to a minimum.

The book is fairly comprehensive, constructed as it is to cover the course for both Medical and first year Science students of Cape Town University.

In the foreword, A. W. Sloan, Professor of Physiology of the University of Cape Town remarks that, ' . . . The time has now come in the book's evolution when . . . it should be made available to a wider public than had access to previous editions.' In this connection it is tempting to quote the old adage concerning the leading of the horse to water: indeed, it is difficult to foresee any very bright future for the book in this city, since the Edinburgh Department of Biochemistry presently produces very excellent sets of practical notes exactly applicable to the courses of instruction offered. Under these circumstances, no book, no matter how good, can hope to compete.

To any student less fortunate than we in Edinburgh, however, this book may be recommended as an elegantly produced, if somewhat terse, guide to the subject, available at very reasonable cost.

R.B.L.E.

PSYCHOLOGY IN RELATION TO MEDICINE
by R. M. Mowbray, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology, University of Glasgow, and T. Ferguson Rodger, Professor of Psychological Medicine, University of Glasgow. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1963. Pp. 399. Illustrated. Price 36s.

Few books are arranged in such a way as to help the student to remember what he has read, or to aid the process of learning. We have all been told that the best method is to survey material, read the detail, and then summarise the main points. Here at last is a book set out in such a way. The material included is that taught to Glasgow students in their third pre-clinical year, and seems to be more comprehensive than the parallel course in Edinburgh. As psychological medicine gains increasing emphasis in the medical course, it seems most appropriate that a book such as this should be available for the pre-clinical and clinical student alike. Just as physiology is essential to the understanding of medicine, so psychology may be regarded as essential to the understanding of clinical psychological medicine—this is the argument of the authors, and it seems quite true.

The price is the only drawback, 36s. being for more than the average student can afford for this type of book. However, most will find that they wish to read, and some are sure to be so captivated that they will be prepared to pay this sum in order to own such a pleasing book.

R.H.

Wheeler & Jack's HANDBOOK OF MEDICINE.
Revised by Robert Coope and C. A. Clarke.
12th Edition. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone.
22s 6d.

The authors purport no more than a desire to provide the clinical fledgling with a "preliminary sketching of a background to his experiences" and not to consider the alterations of pathological aetiology. The former claim was felt to be fully justified in view of the wide field of interests covered and the succinct manner with which each is analysed in terms of the rationality of the aetiology, diagnosis and prognosis. However, the latter claim is somewhat modest because certain sections do in fact consider at some length those diseases whose aetiology is still moot, e.g. sarcoidosis. Worthy of note are the sections dealing with the principles of electrocardiography and the anatomy and physiology of the C.N.S. The comprehensive nature, the easy literary style, the convenient size and the low cost should make the book attractive to medical students of all years.

B. Hawley

A SYNOPSIS OF SURGICAL ANATOMY. A. Lee
McGregor. Bristol: John Wright. £1 15s.

True to its original purpose, this book has been the standby of Fellowship candidates and surgeons for many years. The 1963 Edition continues this tradition. Much new material has been added and the entire text has been extensively revised, resulting in a noticeably thicker volume. There are new chapters on the pulmonary and cardiovascular systems in keeping with their greater surgical importance. Certain anatomical facts which are no longer of practical significance have been deleted.

Part I: Anatomy of the Normal gives a concise account of most of the anatomical structure of surgical importance. By omitting the detailed description of less important things the simply stated facts about the structures that really matter are more easily remembered and the practical application of this anatomical knowledge leaps to the surface. Frequently, as students, when presented with a mass of dry anatomical facts, we may have asked what their significance could possibly be. Lee McGregor makes the answer so obvious that one

is almost ashamed to have raised the question. Part II: Anatomy of the Abnormal is of even greater practical value. It contains so much clinically useful information that this section alone is worth more than the cost of the book.

The language employed by the author might be open to some criticism. It would seem he has failed to keep abreast of recent changes in anatomical nomenclature. His purpose however, is not to teach but to relate anatomical knowledge to the practice of surgery. Rightly or wrongly, most surgeons of today still use the old names they were taught as students years ago. For one who has some knowledge of anatomy this book can be most useful in making the surgeon's language intelligible. Many surgeons are fond of eponyms and expect their students to know them. Very few are taught by Anatomists. This book with its old terminology and inclusion of eponyms with the conventional name quite successfully eliminates the language barrier between the Anatomist and the Surgeon.

D. A. RANNEY, B.A., D.M.

ELECTROCARDIOGRAPHY by R. W. D. Turner,
O.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.P.Ed. Edinburgh:
E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1963. Pp. 155.
Illustrated. Price 20s.

This attractive small book is based on a series of articles published in "The Practitioner" during 1962. Though primarily intended for general practitioners, it is of very great interest to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. There are many illustrations conveniently arranged to demonstrate all the common findings, and the effects of some common errors are also shown. In all, it is a most satisfyingly 'down to earth' guide to the fundamentals of what often seems a highly complex specialist investigation. The author points out that the value of electrocardiography is in proportion to the experience of the interpreter, and surely this may be said of almost any clinical sign or test. This book forms an excellent basis for the gaining of experience by presenting the simple facts in a clear and concise manner. The price 20s., may be more than the casual reader would wish to pay, but taking the large number of illustrations into account, makes the book extremely good value.

R.H.