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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE CHRISTIAN PHYSICIAN in the Advance of the Science and Practise of Medicine. Edited by A. M. Connell and A. J. Orange. publ. G. A. Lindeboom. 142 pp.

This book is a report on the 2nd International Congress of Christian Physicians held at Oxford last year. While not as comprehensive as the book reviewed above, it does reflect a variety of situations created by the advance of medicine. The papers presented include contributions on the medical implications of promiscuity, drug addiction and the population explosion, as well as ones on the role of the Christian doctor in scientific, therapeutic and clinical research.

The contributors are all Christian physicians and believe that Christianity has a basic part to play in the advance of medicine. In a profession such as this it is becoming more obvious each day that the study of medical ethics requires serious recognition of the Christian viewpoint. D.B.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY: Medicine. A Christian approach. Edited by Vincent Edmunds, M.D., M.R.C.P. and C. Gordon Scorer, M.D., F.R.C.S. E. & S. Livingstone. publ. 200 pp. 1967. 30s.

The age of the simple doctor/patient relationship and straightforward treatment is passed! As man's power to control the functioning of the human body extends, so his ethical responsibilities increase bringing a complexity of socio-medical problems and moral arguments.

This book sets out the topics of medical conjecture which have recently received widespread publicity, and discusses them from a Christian viewpoint. The articles are clear and well written; the problems are logically discussed and, in the views presented by the authors, the reader becomes aware of the sincerity and Christian faith behind the writing.

As more and more ethical responsibility is required of the doctor it is imperative that he should honestly consider each of these problems. As the Bible has provided us with our moral code since the time of Moses what is more logical than that we should turn to it for guidance in modern day issues?

This book would greatly benefit all doctors and students, and indeed all those who are in any way concerned with the social and moral structure of the world's communities. D.B.

THE ENIGMA OF CORONARY HEART DISEASE. By A. H. T. Robb-Smith. 150 pages. Published by Lloyd & Luke Ltd. 1967. 30s. net.

This is an admirable monograph on a subject which is defined by many as an epidemic. And the enigmatic element of this "epidemic" is concisely reviewed.

The author points out that statistics are influenced not simply by the actual incidence of the disease, but by the changing nomenclature in use and by the attitude of doctors to the condition. In fact there is little evidence at present to suggest that the increased prevalence in degenerative heart disease reflects anything more than the survival of an increasing population of an age susceptible to these pathological changes. Consideration is also given to the multifactorial entanglements of the disease — culture, social class, country and sex, for instance.

The book leans perforce on much statistical evidence. While the majority of this is presented clearly, some of the graphs suffer from having been reduced to a smaller page size and this makes their interpretation daunting. Perhaps later editions, which are assuredly deserved, will carry simplified figures of these. In view of the recent symposium on angina pectoris, this book should hold out special interest to the medical profession in Edinburgh. M.F.M.

THE E.E.G. IN CLINICAL PRACTICE. Laidlaw & Stanton. E. & S. Livingstone. 40s.

This readable book opens with a brief description of the technique of E.E.G. recording, and this is followed by a chapter dealing very simply with the interpretation of the records.

The main section is concerned with the clinical application of the E.E.G. in various disorders. Typical cases are described and lavishly illustrated with normal and abnormal tracings. The contribution which the E.E.G. can make to diagnosis or management in any given situation is assessed, and its limitations emphasised.

The fourth chapter discusses the future place of electroencephalography in both neurology and general medicine. Finally, there is an appendix designed especially for those wishing to learn the technique of E.E.G. reporting.

Carefully planned, clearly worded and beautifully presented, this book is recommended to all interested in acquiring a basic understanding of the electroencephalogram. C.B.M.G.

LECTURE NOTES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE. Rodger. (Third Edition). E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 8s 6d.

Concise information on Psychological Medicine in hard to come by. To attempt a course through a subject so beset with theoretical controversies in a little over 100 pages is a remarkable achievement.

The authors temper their stride through this course of lecture notes with aptly chosen references to a number of recognised books on the subject, enabling the reader to break off into areas of greater detail that may catch his fancy (or his prospective examiner's approval!). It is especially pleasing to see recommendation of many of the excellent Penguin series concerned with this topic. The book is headed in neat sections, and includes a basic glossary of terms at its outset.

M.F.M.

HISTOLOGICAL APPEARANCES OF TUMOURS.

By R. Winsten Evans. E. & S. Livingstone. Edinburgh, 1966. £10 10s.

This is not a book aimed at the undergraduate reader but he would do well to be aware of it as a reference volume. It is aimed at the clinician and pathologist who want to have in one volume a good account of the most common tumours and some of those rarely seen. Towards this aim it succeeds admirably.

Each chapter of the book is complete in itself giving an embryological account of the tissue or organ, and then going on to describe the various tumours which are formed. This approach leads to a methodical and more understandable exposition. It also gives an insight into the difficulties of tumour classification.

This book is profusely illustrated with photomicrographs of a very high standard. It is however a little disappointing to find no colour reproductions but in a book of this scope the cost would be excessive. It would also have been of use to have occasional photographs of the macroscopic appearance of some of the tumours. Diagrams of the most common sites of origin and metastatic spread would also have been helpful. However these criticisms are small when one considers the excellence of the descriptive text.

Neoplastic disease would appear to be becoming more important to the clinician. This type of reference work is therefore of value no matter what is the chosen field. To the undergraduate it affords the opportunity of delving deeper into aspects of tumour pathology and coming to a better understanding of neoplasia.

A.M.D.

THE EYE IN GENERAL PRACTICE. C. R. S. Jackson. E. & S. Livingstone 1967.

The scant amount of time devoted to ophthalmology in Edinburgh's new curriculum allows but the shallowest study of the subject. For this Dr. Jackson's little book is admirably suited. For the student whose interest in the subject is not limited to passing the necessary examination, the book has several frustrating omissions. Little attention is paid to aetiology and pathology; as with all Livingstone publications the quality of the illustrations is excellent but there are simply not enough; description and illustration of operative technique is negligible. As the book is tailored to meet the needs of the general practitioner these omissions are perhaps understandable. For the average student and G.P. the book remains adequate — with a little appropriate revision it could be excellent.

I.C.M.

CLINICAL EXAMINATION. Edited by John McLeod. 2nd Edition. E. & S. Livingstone 1967. Pp. 567. 45s.

The enthusiasm which greeted the first edition of this text was a well-deserved tribute to the teachers of the Edinburgh Medical School. For the first time many of their bedside diagnostic hints were set down in print in an easily-assimilated form. The second edition has been expanded to include chapters by Sir James Fraser on examination of the Surgical patient and by Dr. J. S. Robson on simple laboratory tests. Examples of methods of examination discussed have now been added to most chapters and the illustrations increased by some 50 line drawings and plates.

At 45/- "McLeod" seems destined to join "Davidson" as a must for medical students throughout the Commonwealth.

I.C.M.

DEMONSTRATIONS OF OPERATIVE SURGERY. Hamilton Bailey. 3rd Edition. E. & S. Livingstone 1967. Pp. 422. 50s.

This, the smallest volume from the Hamilton Bailey surgical stable, is a useful introduction to operative surgery for the clinical student. Written throughout in the first person, the text reads as a commentary on twenty major and minor procedures by 22 leading surgeons. Early chapters deal with theatre organisation and technique. The most common operations in general, orthopaedic, gynaecological and neurosurgery are then described in turn. A glossary of surgical instruments is included in the appendix. Unfortunately anatomical detail has been kept at nursing level throughout, limiting the book to a basic but not unhelpful introduction for the junior clinical student.

I.C.M.

THE STORY OF WILLIAM HUNTER. By Sir Charles Illingworth. E. & S. Livingstone. Pp. 130. 35s.

William Hunter may not have been so well remembered by succeeding generations of medical students as his younger brother, John, but during his own lifetime he had no peer as a teacher.

The boy of thirteen who left Kilbride in 1731 to begin his studies for the Ministry soon tired of the church, and turned to medicine. After studying in Edinburgh under Professor Munro, and in London, he became a teacher of Anatomy himself, in that city, in 1740. He went on to found London's first medical school, and in those days when the care of women in childbirth was left to incompetent midwives and physicians, and surgeons hesitated to risk their reputations by practising the art, he became Queen Charlotte's Obstetrician.

But this sensitive, scholarly man, who showed such compassion for his patients and concern for his pupils, had interests that ranged far outside medicine.

The book is written in the first person, and if this suggests that some historical accuracy has been sacrificed, it has also made it easier for the author to construct a fascinating narrative.

N.B.T.

EMERGENCY SURGERY OF THE HAND. Eric Moberg. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 10s 6d net.

Primary management of the acute hand injury is the responsibility of the general practitioner, the casualty officer and the surgeon. This comprehensive little monograph is for those who cannot afford the time to consult a larger text on the subject. Let it be said however that Professor Moberg is an internationally known figure in this field and condenses into 70 pages information he considers essential from his experience. He stresses the importance of preventing infection, of Bunnell's atraumatic operative technique, of immobilising the hand in its functional position, and of quantitative assessment of the sensory function (tactile gnosis) of the hand; he includes a test for sensory loss based on the Ninhydrin reaction.

The book reads easily and has been translated from the original Swedish, via German, by Mr. McQuillan, Senior Lecturer in Orthopaedic Surgery at this university. It is well worth the financial outlay.

M.F.M.

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