

# RES MEDICA

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## Book Reviews

### Abstract

Clinical Examination Edited by John Macleod. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. First edition. Pp. 513. Price 35s.

Techniques in Chemical Pathology, by G. A. Cheyne. 397 pages. Price 42/-. Published by Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford.

The Principles and Practice of Medicine Edited by Sir Stanley Davidson. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Seventh Edition. Pp. 1260. Price 37s. 6d.

Tropical Disease Supplement to The Principles and Practice of Medicine. By Sir Alexander Biggam and Frederick J. Wright. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964.

Lecture Notes on Psychological Medicine By T. Ferguson Rodger and I. M. Ingram, G. C. Timbury, R. M. Mowbray. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1964. Second edition. Pp. 108. Price 7s. 6d.

Janus in the Doorway by Douglas Guthrie. Pitman Medical Publishing Co. Ltd. Price 50/-.

The Biochemical Approach to Life by F. R. Jevons. Pages 182. Price 28/-. Published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. (London), 1964.

A Synopsis of Cardiology by D. Weitzman. John Wright & Sons Ltd., Bristol. 1964. 30/-.

A Short History of Chalmers Hospital by W. N. Boog Watson. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1964. 2/ 6.

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# Book Reviews

**CLINICAL EXAMINATION.** Edited by John Macleod. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. First edition. Pp. 513. Price 35s.

The aim of this book is to give an account of the procedures carried out by a doctor examining a patient at the bedside or in the consulting room. It is, in effect, a book of the clinical methods of some of the consultants of the Edinburgh Medical School, and so it will naturally be read with interest by both undergraduates and postgraduates. It is impossible to learn clinical methods from a text-book—these can only be learnt by practical experience. But it is stimulating to read the techniques practiced by those with so much experience. This book will be a most valuable guide for those starting their clinical studies, and is a marked improvement over the other books on clinical methods at present available. The book is well conceived, and attractively set out so that it can be read easily. Many books on this topic fail because they are not written in an interesting manner—this is a book which looks interesting. The only criticism to be made is that 500 pages make a rather lengthy book, which should be read at a time in the undergraduate career when several subjects are making demands on time. The illustrations are good, but there are not enough—more pictures and fewer words, would increase the value of this book, which is quite likely to become very popular.

R.R.S.H.

**TECHNIQUES IN CHEMICAL PATHOLOGY,** by G. A. Cheyne. 397 pages. Price 42/-. Published by Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford.

Mr Cheyne, in the Preface, states that 'this book is aimed at the trained technician in the medical laboratory . . . is intended to guide him through the examination of the Institute of Medical Laboratory Technology . . .'. The aim is true, but the relative absence of the diagnostic significance of the various tests makes it evident that if the medical student was to be considered as a possible target, then it would be in a less important, peripheral, position. Consequently such a book is not one which can be recommended to the majority of the readers of this Journal.

B.H.

## THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

Edited by Sir Stanley Davidson. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Seventh Edition. Pp. 1260. Price 37s. 6d.

Since it first appeared in 1952, Davidson's Medicine has been produced every year, either as a reprint or as a new edition. Such a record says more for the quality of the book than can any review. To sell 200,000 copies of any text-book in a period of eleven years is indeed a remarkable achievement!

The new edition is longer by 156 pages, but the increase in price is only slight. Each chapter has been revised and brought up to date, and the layout is rather different. There can be no doubt of the value of this clear, authoritative, and up to date book.

**TROPICAL DISEASE.** Supplement to The Principles and Practice of Medicine. By Sir Alexander Biggam and Frederick J. Wright. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964.

The appearance of this supplement does not mean that the old section on tropical diseases has been dropped from the main book; these tropical diseases which are of interest to the doctor in a temperate climate are still described in the main work. This supplement concerns diseases which are common or important actually in the tropics, and so is of main interest to those who work or live abroad.

R.R.S.H.

## LECTURE NOTES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE.

By T. Ferguson Rodger and I. M. Ingram, G. C. Timbury. R. M. Mowbray. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1964. Second edition. Pp. 108. Price 7s. 6d.

The first edition of this booklet was published in 1962, and this second edition is substantially the same, and at the same price. These paperbacks of Livingstone's are very good value. Not intended as a text, this booklet is a very useful study aid. It can be read very rapidly and provides a good framework of classification on which further knowledge can be hung. Many students find psychological medicine a confusing subject to learn, because they do not have a sound idea of the layout of information. Familiarity with this book in the early stages of the course should prove of great help from this point of view.

A convenient glossary has been added to this edition, and this also is of great help to the beginner.

R.R.S.H.

**JANUS IN THE DOORWAY**, by Douglas Guthrie.  
Pitman Medical Publishing Co. Ltd. Price 50/-.

This book consists of a selection of essays on various aspects of medical history. The essays, which are grouped in six sections each with a central theme, range in subject matter from 'The Search for a Philosophy of Medicine' and 'On Writing a History of Medicine', 'The Medical and Scientific Exploits of King James IV' and 'Coryats' Crudites—a Continental Tour of 1608' The second mentioned essay contains a valuable item—a paragraph devoted to the place and purpose of the book review!

We are introduced to the place of medical history in medical education and our appreciation of this view is increased as we become acquainted with various aspects of medical progress throughout the ages. The men behind a few of the great names next attracts our attention. The last essay in the collection would, perhaps, indicate that the most important factor for success in medicine is the choice of our parents.

Dr Guthrie in this book provides us with additional evidence of his ability to write on a technical subject in a manner which not only provides information but is a pleasure to read. It is this second quality which will ensure a wider interest among general readers.

J.P.

**THE BIOCHEMICAL APPROACH TO LIFE**, by F. R. Jevons. Pages 182. Price 28/-. Published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. (London), 1964.

"To give conceptual coherence to the individual topics treated . . . to build up a rationale of the biochemical approach. From isolated molecules and events on the molecular scale, typified by proteins and single enzyme reactions . . . to their collaboration and organisation above the molecular level in sub-cellular particles". Such is the target which Dr. Jevons book has its sights levelled, and, after nine chapters of easy logical projection of biochemical concepts, may be said to have been hit squarely.

This year marks the beginning of new concepts in the teaching of pre-clinical students, with a greater emphasis being placed upon the scientific aspects of pre-clinical medicine. A book such as this will make the initiation rites of the novice to the new course more pleasurable and intellectually rewarding by awakening his interest in the fundamental problems of living organisms that have been solved and those that are still unsolved.

B.H.

**A SYNOPSIS OF CARDIOLOGY**, by D. Weitzman.  
John Wright & Sons Ltd., Bristol. 1964. 30/-.

This 'Synopsis' falls between two stools—the sophisticated discussion of the cardiologist and the humbler needs of the student. In 200 pages of fairly small type, 'cardiology' is presented in a clear-cut and factual manner. It is a masterpiece of classification and sub-classification. The reader may be equipped to manage the cardiological problem, perhaps better equipped to pass his examinations, but not inspired, nor enthused by this volume. A dull book, its greatest value is perhaps in clarifying ill-digested knowledge, a book for revision, but not learning from. Thus it is not a book for the newcomer. Nor is it discursive enough for the specialist. The 'Synopsis' may find a place in the shelves of the graduate who, while not a cardiologist, may wish rapidly to remind—or acquaint—himself of current ideas in this very important field.

D.L.W.D.

**A SHORT HISTORY OF CHALMERS HOSPITAL**, by W. N. Boog Watson. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1964. 2/6.

The history of a small Edinburgh hospital is unlikely to have much sales appeal outside Edinburgh, and even that within Edinburgh may be small. But then the purpose of the book, presumably, is not for financial gain, but to mark the centenary of this small, rather plain hospital.

This book, unlike some other 'short' histories lives up to its name. Its twenty-six pages are set out in large clear type, well-laid out. Thus it is rapidly read, entertaining and informative for 15 minutes or so. The book is about the right length, any more would pall, any less would be inadequate. Constructed with the bequest of a successful city plumber, George Chalmers, as a 'New Infirmary or Sick and Hurt Hospital', the hospital has served Edinburgh for a 100 years. Beset with financial difficulties, the hospital gradually increased in size and facilities. One learns, for example, that the new nurses quarters of 1887 was placed between the wine-cellar and the mortuary. Present-day nurses might object to the latter.

The over-all impression of the book is that the hospital has been a labour of love for many nameless people. Much time and effort has gone to maintain this small personal hospital. Such devotion is perhaps salutary in an era of mammoth hospitals and government spending.

D.L.W.D.