

REVIEWS

LAW AND ETHICS OF TRANSPLANTATION

Edited by Gordon Wolstenholme and Maeve O'Connor

J. & A. Churchill, London, (1st published as Ethics in Medical Progress with Special Reference to Transplantation 1966). Reprinted 1968. Pp. 257. Price 20s.

This represents the outcome of a small conference of medical men, lawyers, and others concerned in the ethical and legal problems of organ transplantation, and deals amongst other things, with subjects like how long should life be maintained in a person with irrevocable damage of the brain, when does death occur in an unconscious patient dependent on artificial aids to circulation and respiration and does the law permit operations which mutilate the donor for the advantage of another person. The discussants include surgeons, physicians, lawyers, clergy and philosophers, but in a subject such as this, it would be desirable to have potential donors and patients who after all are the most affected, and their views in non-professional issues would be interesting and instructive. The differences in medical practice and legal status in different countries are very evident in the course of the discussion with the French laying down rules to remove kidneys from still living

"cadavers", and the Italians not allowing any such practice at all.

With the advent of other organ transplants, the relevant laws and ethics because of even more pressing interest, and it must be evident that society must decide on its own whether to permit "killing" and "maiming" with a special motive of benefitting another person, and whatever the doctors may do or say, the eventual answer must lie with the community.

The reprinting of this book so soon shows the interest that is at present shown in the subject and it is practically certain that within the next few years, more positive attitude would have to be adopted in order that organ transplantation may not degenerate into professional one-up-manship and systematised "cannibalism".

A. L. Gwee

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THE MANAGEMENT OF CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASE 2ND EDITION

John Marshall, J. & A. Churchill Ltd., London. Pp 215. Price 48s.

Cerebrovascular disease has occupied attention in recent years because of many reasons, but the most important of them must be the fact that advances in techniques have made the diagnosis more certain, and hence it has become possible to put the subject on a more rational basis. The author sets out to delimit the field so as to present within a reasonable compass the essential principles governing the diagnosis and management of cerebrovascular disease, and draws liberally but selectively from the voluminous literature on this subject appearing in recent years. The approach to the subject from anatomical, physiological, and pathological basis is sound and the classification into completed stroke, stroke in evolution, transient ischaemic attacks, carotid stenosis and occlusion are lucid and acceptable even though it is evident that there is still a considerable area of overlapping because of the lack of basic know-

ledge. Discussion of angiography and anticoagulant therapy is practical, succinct and dogmatic, and represents a welcomed change from monographs in recent years whose principal aim seems to be comprehensiveness without any attempt to show the bias or maturity of experience.

It is precisely this approach that makes it a book pleasant to read, useful as a guide, and at the same time easy to be at variance with in many points. Hence his eagerness to accept microscopic emboli or thrombi in preference to spasm, as a common cause, his attempt to delineate completed stroke from stroke in evolution even when it is obvious that such a distinction cannot stand firm unless the time parameter has a much more stable frame of reference, and his attitude towards anticoagulants and surgery must put him in the forefront of all current controversies which are by

no means as clearly settled as he implies. The use of the term "dense hemiplegia" would also sound displeasing on etymological considerations.

The fact that within a space of 3 years, a second edition is out shows how much interest there has been on this subject, and the fact that there is practically a change of emphasis in almost every section of the present edition when compared with that of the past must show how

actively work is progressing in this field, and how quickly theories and dogmas are being demolished and reinstated. To those interested in diseases of cerebral circulation, this book cannot fail to provide interest, and the points of view and selection of bibliography would provide a good stimulus to anyone attracted to this field.

Gwee Ah Leng

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A SYNOPSIS OF INFECTIOUS AND TROPICAL DISEASES

By A.W. Woodruff & S. Bell, John Wright Bristol, 1968.

Pp. 415. Price 47s 6d.

The authors' aim of condensing an appreciable amount of material on infective and tropical diseases into a small volume has been successful. The diseases likely to be met with in tropical and developing countries are quite well covered which should make the book a useful guide for doctors practising in the tropics and medical students preparing for their examinations.

Sufficient account may perhaps not have been taken with regard to newer developments

in virus diseases and changes in the pattern of disease in affluent countries.

The bacteriological aspects of some diseases are a little more detailed than usual in a book on medicine. These may perhaps be abbreviated and space given to inclusion of sections on immunology, chemotherapy, transmission of infectious diseases, disinfection and control of infectious diseases which would enhance the value of this useful and handy volume.

Leong Kok Hwa

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A POCKET VIROLOGY

R.J.C. Hart, J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1968, 125

So much new knowledge has been added by virologists to medical science in recent years that there is a danger we may not be able to see the wood on account of the new trees that have sprung up. "A Pocket Virology", deals with viruses which cause infectious diseases, mainly from the clinical point of view.

Many readers of this journal will recall that the author, Robert J.C. Hart, was attached for some years to the FARELF Laboratory at the B.M.H. We collaborated in one or two minor projects, and had him as External Examiner (Bacteriology) for the University of Singapore. Before he took up his present position of consultant virologist for the PHLS in Exeter, Dr. Hart was Assistant Professor of Pathology in the Royal Army Medical College at Millbank.

Students and Practitioners of Medicine to whom Dr. Hart addresses himself will find his book helpful as a "refresher course". It does not pretend to be a textbook, but for those who wish only to check up on the current state of affairs in virology "A Pocket Virology" serves admirably.

There are only ten chapters, so probably the best way of indicating the nature of the book is to give the chapter headings:- (1) The Characters of Viruses, (2) Techniques, (3) Laboratory Diagnosis (4) Respiratory Infections, (5) Enteroviruses, (6) Infections by inoculations, (7) Infections involving the skin and eyes, (8) Infections of the C.N.S., (9) Virus Vaccine, (10) Other types of Antiviral Therapy.

As the author remarks, in some 60 pages "omissions are inevitable and the subject can only be dealt with superficially". Nonetheless, it may be seen that he has managed to scan a large area of knowledge and practice in modern clinical virology.

This is not surprising since Dr. Hart's long experience in the Royal Army Medical Corps has given him that facility for dispensing with non-essentials which military folk acquire, though he has avoided the other extreme of throwing out the baby with the bath water. How much of the baby Dr. Hart has retained, the reader must discover for himself.

L. K. A.

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LOGAN TURNER'S DISEASES OF THE NOSE, THROAT AND EAR Vol. 7.

Edited by John P. Stewart (1968) Pp. 584, Price 70s. 0d.

Since its first appearance in 1912, this well-known work has been appreciatively received by the profession. This latest edition has only been moderately increased by 74 pages. The new sections on laryngeal conditions in children, chemotherapy in malignant conditions and hypophysectomy, while adequate are brief. This edition has now a full description of the dissection technique of tonsillectomy, but it has retained the Edinburgh view-point that the Guillotine Operation has stood the test of time, while admitting that it has been given up in

many centres. The description of tympanoplasties is very brief and perhaps does not adequately reflect the tremendous interest in these operations as evidenced in current journals.

However, as in previous editions all the important conditions are dealt with adequately, and the current views on treatment are fairly presented. For the intending postgraduate students and interested medical practitioners, this is a useful basic work.

E. H. Goh

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DIAGNOSTIC METHODS

Edited by John W. Mills, Butterworths Pp. 176 Price 25s.

Modern technology and the improvement in techniques have greatly increased the range of investigations in clinical medicine. However, the significance and procedures of these investigations have not always been clearly understood by those hospital staff who request them or those who prepare the patient or specimen for the test.

Many of the specialist techniques now available are complex, time-consuming and expensive. It is therefore, very important that the indications, limitations, possible hazards, and information obtained from these tests be clearly appreciated not only by those who perform them but also by those who request them. Inadequate or incorrect preparation of the patient or the specimen for examination often results in the postponement of a test or gives rise to unsatisfactory results. The contributors to this book have laid emphasis on these aspects of investigations.

In this small volume practically every method and aspect of diagnosis is dealt with. There are subjects on bacteriology, virology and specimen collection, and on haematology, chemical pathology, lung function study, electro-encephalography and electromyography, nuclear medicine and diagnostic radiology. As this book is intended for use as a ward or bedside manual, details have been kept to the minimum for quick and easy reference. At the end of each chapter is appended a list of suggested titles for further reading. The reviewer feels that subjects like cardiac catheterisation, ultrasonic diagnostic methods, immunology and enzymology should be considered for inclusion in future editions.

This book will be a useful guide to medical students in their clinical years and senior nursing staff. Many doctors will also find a great deal to interest them in this manual.

Tham Ngiap Boo

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CLINICAL PHYSIOLOGY

Edited by E.J. Moran Campbell, C.J. Dickinson and J.D.H. Slater

Third Edition 1968, Blackwell Scientific Publication, Oxford and Edinburgh. Price 63 s.

This is the third edition of a book familiar to clinicians as well as students of medicine. Most of the chapters have been revised and rewritten by new contributors and two new ones on immunology and genetics have been added. The editors have maintained this edition in the style of the previous two with the emphasis throughout on a review of normal physiology and a discussion of its alterations in diseased

states. This book does not attempt to explain all aspects of normal or altered physiology but only sets itself to rationalize the "understanding of the phenomena of disease in terms of physiology." (foreward to first edition by Lord Platt).

Particularly interesting and elucidating in this edition is the chapter on Immune mechanisms by N.C. Hughes Jones. The author traces the history and development of immunology with

precise explanations of the terminologies used in this field of medicine before a discussion of the immunological basis of a few diseased states. The chapter on genetics by M. d'A Crawford adopts this similar plan in presentation and is a considerable help in the explanation of hereditary states to students of medicine who are generally unfamiliar with this aspect of medicine.

The chapter on neurology deals only with an account of muscle tone and the nervous mechanisms involved in its maintenance in both a phasic and static state. This chapter is another one of the interesting contributions to this book and is both lucidly written and informative.

General details of normal and altered physiology of cardiac, respiratory, endocrine

and haematological functions and the factors for the maintenance of homeostasis make up the rest of the contributions to this book. The physiology of respiration involves many and difficult mathematical calculations of diffusion and partial pressures of gases. A study of this chapter of the book would tend to take one into the realms of mathematics and out of the practice of clinical medicine and the management of respiratory diseases and respiratory failure.

It is indeed fortunate that this book is written with a clinical bias and is not encumbered with details of experimental physiology. It therefore makes easy reading to all students of medicine and clinicians and is, in addition, an excellent book of reference.

Chew Loy Soong
