

## REVIEWS

Therapeutics: By J. G. Lewis

Unibooks, English Universities Press, London, 1968. Pp. 180. Price: 20 shillings.

This is a book meant to provide an account of some of the more important drugs which nursing and medical staff are likely to meet in their daily work, and at the same time to have detail such that it can be used for reference in the wards as well as hospital libraries. Particular attention is paid to indications and limitations of drugs and also side-effects.

Scanning through the contents, it can be readily appreciated that no definite attempt has been made to adopt a uniform classification, and hence categories listed include itemised grouping like Penicillin and alternative preparations, Tetracycline, other antibiotics, and sulphonamides, and also therapeutic groupings like cancer chemotherapy. Drugs used against bacteria, and also disease-orientated collections

such as drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system, and treatment of common neurological disorders. This illustrates more the general difficulties in presenting information on modern therapeutics than an individual defect in this book itself, for with rapid changes, and multiplicity of synthetic compounds, a very confused picture exists for the moment for clinicians and teachers of therapeutics.

The level of communication tends towards the elementary, but the price and the handy size would make it a reasonable volume to possess for ready reference in a topic in which knowledge gets obsolete even as it is going to press. In this sense, it is a sensible outlay for doctors and medical students.

A. L. Gwee

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## NEUROLOGICAL EXAMINATION IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

By Edwin R. Bickerstaff, M.D. (Birm.), F.R.C.P. (London)

Oxford and Edinburgh: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1968. Pp. 378 and ix; illustrated. 63s.

This book compresses much useful information on practical neurology between its covers. The author sets out to teach the method of examination of the nervous system—how to elicit physical signs and interpret them—and has kept the book readable. This reveals his wide clinical experience.

The discussions in the various chapters are clear and precise and “clinical”, but for those who wish to delve deeper into a particular subject, there are useful references at the end of each section.

The chapters on laboratory investigations and neuro-radiology, and the one on the indications and proper use of modern investigative techniques—electroencephalography,

Echo and Isotopes and electrodiagnosis—are particularly useful in these days when clinicians are becoming more and more “investigation-orientated”. The final chapter on “The indications for full investigation in certain common neurological disorders” will help the inexperienced to decide when to subject patients to the full battery of modern neurological investigation.

This book will prove valuable not only to the postgraduate and embryo consultant but also to the family doctor and the keen undergraduate who is interested in learning something of practical neurology.

Lee Yong Kiat

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## AMPUTATION AND PROSTHESIS

By G. E. Fulford and M. J. Hall

This excellent monograph is the survey of the Artificial Limb Workshops in North West Europe and North America. The authors, a surgeon and an engineer, were granted a travelling scholarship by the British Limbless Ex-servicemen Association to report to the Research Advisory Committee.

In essence, this is a report meant for administrators as a guide to future development in England. The report contains the latest in amputation and prosthesis in sophisticated societies. Unfortunately, in South East Asia, we are more concerned with an Artificial Limb Workshop with limited financial support such as in Africa and South America. In trying to over-simplify the surgical aspects to suit the engineer, and in trying to over-simplify the engineering aspects to suit the surgeon, reading appears rather difficult for the Specialist Surgeon and the Specialist Engineer. The book, I think, is originally in-

tended for administrators and laymen to grasp the essential details and the complicated apparatus in artificial limb manufacture practised in modern developed countries. The amount of material presented in this short monograph is excellent and the authors should be congratulated for condensing a subject matter which is encyclopaedic. However, it will be more useful if the authors have commented more fully after their survey, of each individual subject rather than to arrange it as it is now arranged in various chapters, viz: report, comment and recommendation.

The book makes an excellent reference book for students and physio-therapists who want to delve further into the subject matter. It has an excellent bibliography for the medical profession if any doctor wants to progress further in the field of rehabilitation.

W. G. S. Fung

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### “OPHTHALMOLOGY FOR CASUALTY DEPARTMENTS”

By Dr. G. N. Pattison, M.B., B.S., D.O. (Oxon.), D.O.M.S.

Published by J. & A. Churchill Ltd., 1967, Pp. 58. Price 10s.

There is a need for a concise book on emergency ophthalmology for use of doctors working in a hospital casualty department, for not only is the reputation of the hospital at stake but whether or not an eye can be saved will very often depend on the decision of the casualty officer. Thus Dr. Pattison's booklet is an important contribution and one can only agree with him when he stated in his preface that “a great deal is missing in their clinical experience of ophthalmology. It is often in the casualty department, staffed of necessity by comparatively inexperienced young doctors”.

Dr. Pattison has brought forward the importance of an adequate history of the trauma in dealing with casualty cases. It is stressed that at times the history of injury may be minimal; as in the case of a minute flying particle penetrating the eye when the patient may only feel an initial pain or discomfort. Yet the eye may be harbouring a dangerous foreign body which has brought with it bacteria leading to rapid destruction and disorganisation. It is therefore

stressed that where there is a history of a possible small flying particle such as one when a hammer and chisel or a revolving machine was used, the patient should be referred to an ophthalmologist urgently. Not only may this save the eye but the casualty officer may relieve himself of legal complication.

Referring to Dr. Pattison's account on corneal foreign bodies, one could not agree more with him that more damage can be done by clumsy attempts to remove them than by their presence on the cornea. It has always been my opinion that foreign bodies, unless they are easily removed or are outside the pupillary region of the cornea, should be referred to an ophthalmologist for removal whenever possible.

Dr. Pattison stressed correctly that it is of utmost importance for patients with chemical burns (especially by lime and alkali) to have immediate and profuse irrigation with water or any other bland fluid as a first aid measure. The amount of damage to the eye is usually not how

competent an ophthalmologist is for he often sees these cases hours after injury. On the other hand, the efficiency of the first aid treatment of immediate and profuse irrigation is most important.

I was rather surprised to read that in examining patients with penetrating wounds of the sclera, a gentle palpation of the globe through the upper lid was advocated to reveal that the injured eye is much softer than the other eye. Irreparable damage can be done if pressure is applied deliberately or accidentally to the globe. It is my opinion that it is of the utmost importance that

in any suspected penetrating injury of the eye the ophthalmologist should be asked to attend the patient urgently and the casualty officer should do nothing more than cover the eye very gently with a sterile eye pad.

Despite my above criticism of the book and the absence of photographs and illustrations which the author did express were left out for reasons of economy, I would say that this is a useful book for a young medical officer in the casualty department. It is especially so because of its very low cost.

**Arthur S. M. Lim**

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### A SYNOPSIS OF ANAESTHESIA

By J. Alfred Lee and R. S. Atkinson

John Wright and Sons Ltd., and The English Language Book Society. 6th Edition 1968.  
Pp. 876. Price 25s.

It is a pleasure to see this popular book, which was first published in 1947, now being printed and put on sale as a low price edition. The 3rd and 4th editions have been reprinted several times. This new edition is going to be even more popular because of the low price which is within the means of medical students and house-doctors, and because several sections have been carefully rewritten and rearranged with new chapters added to bring the subject matter pertaining to Anaesthesia and Intensive Care very up to date.

In the section on History of Anaesthesia, Crawford William Long (1815-1878) the first man to use ether and Henry Edmund Gaskin Boyle the introducer of the Boyle's machine, have been included.

In the section on Respiratory Physiology the concept of Dead Space Volume and Acid Base Balance have been brought up to date. The danger to the foetus of hyperventilation during caesarean section has been emphasised.

A very pertinent question from young anaesthetists and surgeons is the significance of anti-hypertensive therapy in patients needing anaesthesia. This the authors have dealt with unequivocally well.

From this edition one can see that drugs like Pentozocine, Propanidid, Gamma-hydroxybutyric acid, Bupivacaine (Marcaine), Diallyl nortoxiferine and isoprenaline have found their

established and sometimes indispensable places in the practice of anaesthesia.

The section on oxygen therapy has been brought up to date and that on Neurolept Analgesia has been extended. Regional anaesthesia has been nicely rearranged and the technique of intravenous local anaesthetic has been added. Enlightened views on anaesthesia for eye surgery and paediatric post-operative care have been given.

Dental Anaesthesia has been completely revised and put under one chapter containing a very comprehensive and complete account. The section on anaesthesia and analgesia in labour too has been very well rearranged. The metabolic effects of shock and its therapy contains the latest concepts. Awareness during surgery and ophthalmic complications have been added to the chapter on complications in Anaesthesia. Measurement of Central Venous Pressure and Urine output, analysis of gas mixtures and computers in anaesthesia have found their way into the chapter on Monitoring. Completely new chapters on Resuscitation and Intensive Therapy Unit have been included.

This volume is a useful book for all anaesthetists and a necessity for students reading for higher postgraduate examinations.

**Tan Seng Huat**

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## THE CARE OF BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE TROPICS

By David Morley

This is a compact little booklet meant for mothers with children who are intending to go overseas to one of the tropical countries. It gives advice on clothing, immunisation, infant feeding, minor tropical ailments, local customs and beliefs. Some of the advice, e.g. swimming and dental care, is meant for very under developed parts, as most large cities would have good medical

care. The part on immunisation is excellent as this is the key question that mothers ask. On the whole, children from Western countries take to the tropics quite well. This booklet answers in a compact way the multitude of questions mothers would ask.

**Freda M. Paul**

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