

REVIEWS

OBESITY AND ITS MANAGEMENT

By Denis Craddock

E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1969. Pp. 191. Price: 35 shillings

Obesity is an increasing problem in affluent societies, and as pointed out by the author, the size and nature of this problem are better appreciated at the general practice than in the hospital. The author is a general practitioner who has taken an interest in obesity, and with a follow-up of cases extending to several years, he certainly has interesting observations to communicate, especially as regards the response to the different methods of treatment, the varying motives of over-eating, the psychological types, the usefulness of several dietetic regimes, and the prognostic aspects. His approach is on the whole a practical and realistic one, and anyone interested in obesity as a treatment problem will find much of interest in this book. The reference included is up-to-date and well-chosen, and the stand taken a laudable one. It is no wonder that some of this work earned

him the Hawthorne Clinical Prize of the British Medical Association in 1968.

The didactic approach, however, has given the impression that obesity is principally a psychologic and metabolic problem, and hence success is to be expected in most cases, and failure is usually a result of non-cooperation. In spite of the inclusion of a chapter on "Intractable obesity", and percentages of success and failure, the impression is not dispelled. Obesity is in fact a far more complicated problem than this small monograph can cover, and the solution may be principally cultural and social instead of medical. Nevertheless, this contribution is a practical contribution to an interesting problem encountered in all branches of medicine.

A. L. Gwee

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INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOTHERAPY—

ITS HISTORY AND MODERN SCHOOLS

By J. A. Hadfield

George Allen & Unwin, London. Pp. 363. Price: 50 shillings

This is a book by one with personal knowledge of the leaders of many of the established schools of psychotherapy such as Freud and Jung, and hence contains interesting personal details and observations that have the mark of authenticity. The style is a simple first person narrative, and the language seldom stultified with the intrusion of professional verbiage, in contra-distinction to many other books of a similar nature. Hence it is eminently suitable for lay readers; and even to practising doctors in or out of psychiatry, it retains a certain degree of attractiveness. The chapters though many—38 in all—are on the whole brief, some

only 3 pages long, and the stand dogmatic and decisive. Hence a purist would find it easy to pick bones, and certainly the views on hysteria, hypnosis, the contribution of William McDougall, and the relative merits and priority of Freud and Jung can easily spark off heated arguments. However, this book is obviously not meant to be an academic wrangling as shown by the absence of a list of reference and by the abundant personal humour throughout the narration. It is indeed excellent light reading both from the point of entertainment and assimilable information.

Gwee Ah Leng

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TETANUS

By E. B. Adams, D. R. Laurence and J. W. G. Smith

Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford and Edinburgh, Pp. 165. Price: £2.10

With the advent of rapid urbanisation and legislation requiring the population to be immunised, the incidences of tetanus seen yearly will decrease. However, all aspects of tetanus are interesting to study and this book by Adams, Laurence and Smith attempts to answer many of the questions and facets that arise in the clinical picture of tetanus and the many problems which occur with its management.

The book begins with the usual manner of monograph with historical introduction, bacteriology, disease process, epidemiology, prevention and finally the treatment of tetanus. All the sections dealt with in this book make interesting reading and provide the reader with many answers to the problems in tetanus. However, one is still faced with the difficulty in understanding how tetanus toxins could travel up the peripheral nerve roots to involve the central nervous system. The effects of the toxin on the central nervous system are believed by the authors to prevent the release of an inhibitory neuro-transmitter in the spinal cord. This results in the agonist and antagonist muscles contracting simultaneously to produce this picture of tetanus.

A valuable prognostic factor not often remembered in a patient with tetanus is pointed out by the authors and it is the interval between the first symptom and the first reflex spasm of tetanus which determines the severity of the disease. This interval relates to the amount

and rate at which the toxin is reaching the central nervous system. The section covering the management of tetanus begins with a discussion on the use of toxoid and anti-toxin. The authors point out that the immune response to tetanus can be impaired by the simultaneous injection of adsorbed tetanus toxoid and anti-toxin. However they recommend that the anti-toxin and adsorbed tetanus toxoid might be given in opposite arms for completion of the course of immunisation. It is difficult to understand how this recommendation is tenable as neutralisation of anti-toxin and toxoid would occur with the resultant elimination even if the same site of injection or the same injection syringe was used.

In the discussion of the treatment of tetanus with the use of drugs and supportive measures with tracheostomy and positive pressure respiration, the authors deal in detail with the problems that arise with tracheostomy and positive pressure respiration. Details of technical faults that may arise with either of these procedures are thoroughly discussed.

Although this book was published in 1969, it does not contain any information or discussion on the over-activity of the sympathetic nervous system in a patient with tetanus. Notwithstanding this deficiency, this book is interesting reading and informative.

Chew Loy Soong

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TROPIC MEDICINE FOR NURSES—Adams & Maegraith

By B. G. Maegraith, H. M. Gilles

Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford and Edinburgh, 1970. Price: £2.75

The third edition of this book has been largely written to provide more information to Nurses in areas "enslaved by the so-called tropical diseases". It is highly recommended to

anyone, nurses or medical practitioners, who wish to have a clear, concise and sound knowledge of tropical diseases in this and other areas.

C. H. Tay

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BOOKS AND JOURNALS RECEIVED

- THE INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF MEDICAL SCIENCE—Horrobin and Gunn (MTP).
- BIOCHEMISTRY FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS—Thorpe *et al.* 9th Edition (Churchill).
- IMMUNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS OF MEDICINE—Humphrey ELBS (Blackwell).
- QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY—Lippold (Churchill).
- A SHORT TEXTBOOK OF HAEMATOLOGY—3rd Edition, Thompson ELBS (Pitman).
- MODERN MEDICINE—Vol. 38, No. 16, 1970.
- FLUORIDATION—The case in favour and the case against, 3rd Edition, 1970.
- PRINCIPLES OF RATIONAL MEDICINE—A. Barlovatz—J. Wright and Sons, U.K.
- THE GENETICS OF BACTERIA AND THEIR VIRUSES—Studies in Basic Genetics and Molecular Biology, 2nd Edition. William Hayes (Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford and Edinburgh).
- FOLIA FACULTATIS MEDICAL UNIVERSITATIS COMENIANAE BRATISLAVIENSIS
ACTA BROCHIMICA POLONICA
- COMMON MEDICAL EMERGENCIES—R. H. Salter (John Wright and Sons, England).
- CONYBEARE'S TEXTBOOK OF MEDICINE—Edited by Mann and Lessof, 15th Edition (Livingstone).

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