

## REVIEWS

## DRUGS: DEVELOPMENT AND USE

British Medical Bulletin, Volume 26, No. 3, 1970. Price: £2/-

The use of potent drugs has its problems. For whilst its effect may be beneficial in healing, it can also be injurious through toxicity and other side-effects. Since potent drugs are relatively recent innovations, much remains to be learnt regarding their adverse effects. This bulletin collects a number of important contributions dealing with topics like conquest of microbial diseases, drugs and changing mortality from non-infectious diseases, psychopharmacy and society, food additives, drug-induced diseases, and initial drug studies. Most of the findings here quoted have already

been reported, but in this volume, they are collected, systemised, and co-ordinated, so that anyone interested in the problem of drug use and abuse can get ready access to the more important and practical aspects. This volume is intended to be a comparison of an earlier number of the British Medical Bulletin, Vol. 25 No. 3, entitled Mechanisms of toxicity. However, the choice and presentation of the various topics make it a very practical and informative volume that should be of interest to any practising physician.

Gwee Ah Leng

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## PSYCHOLOGY IN RELATION TO MEDICINE

By R. M. Mowbray and T. Ferguson Rodger

3rd Edition, 1970. p. 421. Price: 36 shillings

The changing trend of medicine and pattern of illness have increased the importance of psychosomatic diseases in medical education. An understanding of psychology is regarded more and more as a necessity in the practice of medicine. Unfortunately, the many differing schools, and the large number of isolated findings still vaguely correlated with practice, make psychology a medley of views and hypothesis to the uninitiated, and other than students of psychology and psychiatry, the average doctor or medical student finds psychology either too confused to be of real practical application, or in trying to be lucid too dogmatic to be scientific.

This book is a happy medium of the extremes. It gives a concise and reasonably impartial survey of the many schools, and at all times, discusses the topics with a view to practical application. The authors confine themselves to major topics like higher mental processes, intelligence and personality, and give brief but relevant attention to major propositions of leading schools, with the authors' bias evident but not unduly obtrusive. Inclusion of relevant reference and reading list gives the reader a further idea of the authors' personal standpoint and assist the interested reader to make further search. The style is clear and eminently readable, and the price is a reasonable one.

Gwee Ah Leng

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## PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE—A PHYSICIAN'S APPROACH

By Robert L. Richards

E. & S. Livingstone, London, 1970. p. 126. Price: £2.50

This is a delightfully written little book dealing with a subject normally relegated to surgeons. The author, approaching the topic as a physician, deals with the historical and diagnostic aspects lucidly and logically. The material is based on his

own personal experience, which appears considerable and spreads over a period of years. The illustrations are of excellent quality, and the bibliography is extensive. It is well worth the price.

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IMMUNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS OF MEDICINE

By J. H. Humphrey and R. G. White

3rd Edition. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford and Edinburgh

With the great conceptual advances in Immunology and its increasing implications in clinical medicine, there has been a great need for a simple, concise, authoritative yet cheap textbook on Immunology for students of Medicine.

This excellent textbook by Humphrey and White, now in its third edition and also published by the English Language Book Society, has fulfilled this end.

The writing is clear and readable. The beginners will have no difficulty in grasping the subjects which are masterly presented. Glossaries and

References are provided and the problems of nomenclature have been solved by using those internationally approved. The present size has been doubled and much of the contents have been rewritten to incorporate new knowledge. Four chapters are added and there are more plates and charts. In some chapters, however, there are still rooms for improvement (e.g. those dealing with hypersensitivity and autoimmune disorders).

For the student in Immunology, this book is a must. For those who have a casual interest in this subject, this is the best buy.

C. H. Tay

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NEUROLOGICAL EXAMINATION IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

By Edwin R. Bickerstaff

2nd Edition. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford and Edinburgh. p. 378. Price: 63 shillings

This is a book purporting to help the non-neurologist and the neurologist in-training towards the simplest method of eliciting reliable physical signs, and the type of interpretation to place upon them. As it is set out, its presentation is so detailed that it savours of books on elementary clinics and introductory methods. The style is like an instruction manual e.g. "Look next at the conjunctiva, cornea, and iris while the patient moves the eyeball in all directions. Note colours, pigmentary abnormalities, surgical or developmental defects." Only a very methodical and pains-taking author who can produce a book of this nature, and unfortunately, a book as such is tedious though simple to read, for whilst it requires great exactitude to produce instruction manuals, such a style does not make it interesting reading matter!

However, the author's rich personal experience shows up in scattered items throughout the book, and these constitute some rewarding treasures at the end of a wearisome paper-chase. The book is richly and clearly illustrated, and the inclusion of some relevant references at the end of each chapter makes it more useful. Some sections like what arteriogram would or would not show, and the indications and contraindications of electroencephalography remind one very much of instruction to house doctors, and could profitably be omitted. On the other hand, inclusion of some statistics such as frequency of epileptics with normal E.E.G., and normal values of nerve conduction may increase its usefulness. All in all, it is the sort of book which very few would attempt to write, but would not disappoint those who have the patience to read it through.

Gwee Ah Leng

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## MCLACHLAN'S HANDBOOK OF DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF VENEREAL DISEASES

By A. S. Grimble

5th Edition. E. &amp; S. Livingstone. Price: £2.50

This book has been originally intended for doctors, students and nurses, and as such is concise and decisive. The present edition has widened the field of coverage of venereal diseases to include lower genito-urinary inflammations. However, by being selective, the size is not expanded. This must of a necessity lead to some omissions and imbalance, as for example the chapter on psychiatric aspect is so brief as to be

hardly informative whereas that on syphilis is by reference value. The coloured illustrations are not satisfactory and buccal syphilids and mucous patches are barely distinguishable.

Nevertheless, the information contained in this small book is so lucid and readable that for busy doctors who seek an easy source of information, this will prove to be a good investment.

Gwee Ah Leng

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## HYPERTENSION CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND MANAGEMENT

By George Pickering

J. &amp; A. Churchill, London, 1970. Price: 35 shillings

The author, an acknowledged foremost worker in hypertension, has tried in this booklet to give a summary of the outstanding facts that practitioners and students need to know if they are to understand and to deal with the problems they meet in their patients, and the materials are based on his longer work on High Blood Pressure.

The discussion is succinct and decisive, as he points out the fallacy of adopting an arbitrary level of pressure as being pathological, and rejects the classification of eye grounds by Keith. The therapeutic approach is also practical and logical. In view of the serious consequence of misdiagnosis of an extremely common condition, this booklet

should be recommended for serious reading by every practitioner, for irrespective of possible differences of opinion regarding the causes and management particularly with respect to the role of the kidney, and the need of treatment in mild hypertension, a study of the thesis put forward in this booklet will help to dispel many aspects of loose thinking that have been allowed to circulate on the topic because of inaccurate methodology and financial interest. The price may appear a bit high for a paper-back of this size, but the outlay is amply repaid by the benefit one gains from the book.

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