

REVIEWS

DRUG TREATMENT OF EPILEPSY

By Alan Richens

Published by Henry Kimpton, London 1976.

This is a book which represents the impact of pharmacokinetics on treatment. Effective treatment of epilepsy has been with us for barely 50 years, and in the last 20 years, interest in drug metabolism and in-vivo measurement has produced many isolated findings. The benefit of a drug is known now to be dependent on absorption, breakdown, bio-availability and body cell responsiveness. Measurement of blood level would help to introduce some exactitude into this maze of empirical treatment, although we still lack precision in determining cell responsiveness. The approach is more a pharmacological than a clinical one, and students of epilepsy will gain better insight through this book of the methodology of drug evaluation, both with regard to toxicity and effectiveness. The chapters on drug interactions and drug-induced diseases are particularly interesting for

clinicians who need a ready source of reference for many pieces of scattered information.

Obviously, some sort of trial is necessary to assess drug efficacy, and controlled trials would appear to be more valuable than most others. However, epilepsy is a disease state where the seizures can vary in nature and frequency spontaneously over long periods of time, and when a patient can have several kinds of seizures not readily apparent to clinicians and even more difficult to differentiate by untrained observers. These would make controlled studies less decisive than what the author has wanted us to believe. All in all, it is a worthwhile book to add to the library of anyone interested in epilepsy.

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MCQ TUTOR FOR STUDENTS OF PATHOLOGY

By Bernard Lennox

William Heinemann, London, 1975.

The author of the book is Professor Bernard Lennox, titular Professor of Pathology at the Western Infirmary, University of Glasgow. The book is the first British MCQ in Pathology, and is based on the author's twenty years' experience as an examiner in Pathology. It is meant especially for medical undergraduates and candidates for higher examinations such as the primary FRCS and equivalent.

The scope of the book covers the various sections of General and Systemic Pathology, but within each section, the coverage is not meant to be comprehensive. It is therefore meant mainly for self-assessment and learning some Pathology from the book is only by the way, as stated by the author himself; and the student who knows all the answers in the book but nothing beyond is not adequately

equipped in the subject. Obviously, he has to acquire more knowledge from the standard texts.

There are answers to all the questions, the answers being given on the reverse side of each page of questions, an ideal arrangement for quick reference. The author also gives some indications of marks score to be expected from undergraduates and postgraduates. The questions are generally well planned.

One of the most useful portions of the book is the appendix, in which the author gives some very useful practical advice on answering MCQ papers.

The book is an useful adjunct to the standard texts for undergraduates and postgraduates preparing for Pathology examinations.

E.P.C. Tock