

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### VISION AND CIRCULATION

Edited by J.S. Cant  
Henry Kimpton, London  
£8.50

A record of the proceedings of the Symposium on Vision and Circulation held in Glasgow in July 1974. The material is well presented and covers a small field in great depth. However the book will appeal to a very modest number of readers because of this reason. Some sections are of great value and interest to the clinician.

R. Loh

### VENEREAL DISEASES

Ambrose King & Claude Nicol  
ELBS Edition of 3rd Edition 1975  
£2.50

This book requires no introduction. Written by 2 prominent venereologists, it provides comprehensive accounts of the major sexually transmitted diseases, syphilis and gonorrhoea, and adequate accounts of almost all the other minor ones. The 3rd edition has included short chapters on herpes genitalis and candidiasis. The reproduction of the colour plates turn out surprising well. There is room for improvement for the monochrome plates.

For the medical student, who needs to acquire sufficient knowledge of these important diseases, there is no better buy, at 2.50, than this ELBS edition of the 3rd edition of "Venereal Diseases". For the general practitioner, the practical approach set out in the appendix on the routine investigation of new patients will be particularly helpful. For the specialist, this textbook will be useful reference.

H.L. Chan

### POLIOMYELITIS

R.L. Huckstep  
Churchill Livingstone 1975  
£3.00

A guide for developing Countries — including Appliances and Rehabilitation for the disabled by R.L. Huckstep Pp. 279 with numerous linedrawings 1975. Edinburgh, London and New York, Churchill Livingstone. 3.00. Professor Huckstep is a recognised authority in the development of orthopaedic ser-

vices for the developing countries using simple methods and making full use of available facilities. The book is an eye-opener even to surgeons practising in Asia, Africa and South-America. Though based on an African experience his dogmatic teaching style of the simple and effective surgical procedures together with the fitting of braces and other orthopaedic appliances will enable many cripples to be ambulant and fend for themselves. For those that cannot, simple, cheap and effective wheelchairs can be constructed by following his clearly illustrated instructions. The book produced so cheaply is to be commended to house-surgeons, registrars and even the practising surgeons in our part of the world.

V.K. Pillay

### CELLULAR MECHANISMS MODULATING GONADAL HORMONE ACTION.

R.L. Singhal and Thomas, J.A. (eds.).  
HM + M Medical & Scientific Publishers.  
£17.50. 1976.

This second volume of *Advances in Sex Hormone Research* is a great improvement on the first volume. The contents are relevant and homogeneous. It is a moot point whether the mechanisms discussed are more "molecular" than "cellular" — but that is the worry of those who have to think up catchy titles for books.

A good paper to begin with would be W.R. Butt's "Human Gonado-trophins: Biochemical, Immunological and Clinical Aspects". You will have to look 100 pages further for the companion paper "Mechanism of Action of Gonadotrophins" by B.B. Saxena and P. Rathnam. (I find this disconcerting. Two related papers on prolactin are similarly scattered). In the latter paper the lack of mention of the important work of Bogdanove and his colleagues is conspicuous (eg. Bogdanove et al (1974) *Endocrinology* 95, 219; Diebel et al (1973) *Endocrinology* 92, 1065). These authors have shown that, in the rat, FSH is pleomorphic. The molecular characteristics of stored and circulating FSH are altered by the absence or presence of gonadal steroids. This is in addition to the better known quantitative feedback changes in plasma levels. It becomes imperative therefore that data from the bioassay and immunoassay of FSH in response to androgens, for

instance, will have to be evaluated in this new light. Also I looked in vain for a discussion of somatostatin on prolactin secretion. True, there is a section on the control of prolactin secretion by hypothalamic catecholamines (R. MacLeod and I. Login). But in a book purporting to review "advances" this omission can only be viewed with dismay. It is not that the work on somatostatin is too recent. (see, for instance, Rivier and Vale (1974) *Endocrinology* 95, 978; Yen et al (1974) *N. Engl. J. Med.* 290, 935). The section on "Antiandrogens" by R.O. Neri is

well-written and up-to-date. Antiandrogens are also discussed by Prasad and Rajalakshmi in their paper "Fertility Suppression in Male".

In spite of these shortcomings the book is a good review of current knowledge in the field. Enough emphasis on the clinical aspects of gonadal hormone action awaits to reward the doctor who can be persuaded to study the book in the first place. At £17.50 per volume he would more likely do it in the medical library than the bookshop.

S.E. Aw.