

Book Reviews

WHAT TO DO IN A CRISIS

Compendium of Emergencies. Edited by H. Gardiner-Hill, M.D., F.R.C.P. (Pp. 328+xi. 55s.) London: Butterworths. 1963.

A qualified doctor is always expected to do something useful when faced with any sort of medical emergency. This may be extremely embarrassing, for a medical degree does not confer on its possessor an invariable expertness in all such crises. Every doctor should therefore possess a concise reference book to enable him in an emergency to cover the critical period before facilities for orthodox treatment become available.

A number of such works are available in Great Britain and America, but only one other, so far as I know, is written, as this one is, not by a single author but by a team of specialists. The team gathered together by Dr. Gardiner-Hill is a distinguished one, each member of which has decided with a discriminating judgment what emergencies are most likely to occur in his particular field and what he, the expert, would advise the inexpert to do under the circumstances. The emergency is considered under three headings: its nature and pathology; its recognition; and its management and treatment. The word "emergency" has been liberally interpreted to include such conditions as pneumonia, acute urinary infection, pyloric stenosis, and so forth. Nearly all the common acute conditions are discussed which occur in internal medicine, paediatrics, psychiatry, dermatology, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, obstetrics and gynaecology, anaesthetics, otorhinolaryngology, and dentistry. The index, of great importance in a reference book of this kind, is a good one.

On the whole the advice given is informative, concise, and up to date. It may be questioned whether in diabetic coma zinc protamine insulin should ever be given intravenously even if soluble insulin is not available. No mention is made of the use of glucagon in the treatment of hypoglycaemic coma. It is not stressed, as it should be, that thyroxine is preferable to thyroid extract in hypothyroidism. In the treatment of acute adrenal crisis it is stated that "if the patient is not vomiting 1-3 mg. fluorocortisone should be given by mouth and repeated 12 hours later. If the patient is vomiting, 50 mg. of hydrocortisone hemisuccinate should be injected through the drip tubing and a further 50 mg. added to the reservoir of the first litre of infusion fluid." The vomiting patient would certainly be the more likely to recover.

While a work by a number of experts has great advantages over one by a single author, it requires careful editing to ensure uniformity. It is unfortunate in this case that the editor has allowed his contributors to use the proprietary or official names of drugs and the apothecaries or metric system of dosage quite indiscriminately. It is confusing, for example, to have the anticholinesterase drug edrophonium referred to by its official name in the section on anaesthetic emergencies and by its proprietary name, "tensilon," in that on neurological emergencies.

DERRICK DUNLOP.

CURRENT PSYCHIATRY

Proceedings of Third World Congress of Psychiatry. Volume I: (Pp. 746+li; illustrated.) *Volume II:* (Pp. 749-1420+xii; illustrated.) Two volumes: £14. Montreal: University of Toronto Press and McGill University Press. 1963.

These two volumes reflect the range and variety of the problems which are in the forefront of psychiatric research

and practice to-day. The review is not truly international because only 1% of the 400 papers presented came from the Soviet Union. Informative though they are, it would be unfair to conclude that they represent the state of psychiatry in that part of the world. To many of those who attended the congress the most memorable session was the one devoted to a problem not strictly psychiatric—namely, scientific creativity. The speakers were Lord Adrian, Linus Pauling, and Albert Szent-Györgyi, three Nobel-laureates. Their brilliant papers are as enjoyable to read as they were to listen to, each of them presenting a different approach and a different personality. The two academic lectures were given by Jean Piaget and H. W. Magoon. Three special lectures were set aside for leading themes of psychiatry. They were the phenomenological and descriptive aspects (H. C. Rümke); the contributions of experimental psychiatry to the art of healing (J. Masserman); and current psychiatric theories (Henri Ey).

This congress report will be invaluable for future historians of psychiatry. For those working in the field as practising clinicians or investigators to-day it is a unique source book which ought to be in every medical and psychiatric library. If used properly it should be worth the formidable price, especially as the World Congress of Psychiatry meets only every five years.

E. STENGEL.

COMPARING RADIATION AND CHEMICALS

Radiation and Radiomimetic Chemicals. Comparative Physiological Effects. By L. A. Elson, D.Sc., Ph.D., D.L.C., F.R.I.C., M.I.Biol. (Pp. 124+vii; illustrated. 25s.) London: Butterworths. 1963.

The Institute of Cancer Research has played a leading role in the development and clinical testing of anti-cancer chemical agents. Dr. L. A. Elson, a prominent member of this group, has done good service in writing this short book giving us the basic facts about them. One particularly welcomes the chemical formulae and the numerous figures and tables, for they allow readers like the reviewer, with the minimum of competence in this field, to follow the story readily.

Since the use of these agents is relatively new, there is a strong case for comparing them with the older therapeutic weapon, ionizing radiation—hence the title of the book. At the cellular and subcellular levels, however, the fashion is now to contrast, to find the specific differences in action. Dr. Elson has not been deeply concerned in reporting these finer details of interest to geneticist, cytologist, and microbiologist. Readers with clinical interest from medical student to specialist might, however, find the time—for example, on train journeys—to read this slim volume, which fits readily into the brief-case. It is well written, well indexed, and well produced.

J. F. LOUTIT.

CURRENT PROBLEMS OF ATHEROSCLEROSIS

Atherosclerosis. Mechanisms as a Guide to Prevention. By Campbell Moses, M.D. (Pp. 239; illustrated. 60s.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1963.

This book is an admirably mature and thoughtful appraisal of many of the current problems of atherosclerosis. Dr. Moses designed it to provide for physicians with an interest in atherosclerosis a survey of present concepts of mechanisms involved in its pathogenesis, thereby enabling them to have a better understanding of present methods aimed at prevention. But he has done more. He has packed a remarkable amount of useful information into a comparatively small book, and the 1,250 references will