

Book Reviews

Hypertension: a Hypothesis

Neurogenic Hypertension. By C. J. Dickinson, D.M. (Pp. 274+xiii; illustrated. 52s. 6d.) Oxford: Blackwell. 1965.

This book is a personal scientific philosophy embodying the author's views and work on the concept that hypertension is due to reduced blood supply to the medulla of the brain. The book is divided into three parts. Part one deals with the construction of this hypothesis of blood-pressure regulation in general, and reviews the possible mechanisms underlying long-term blood-pressure control by the brain. Part two tests the hypothesis, beginning by summarizing the predictions and expectations of the hypothesis, and proceeding to describe the nervous control of the cerebral arteries, to compare these arteries with those elsewhere in the body, and to discuss the vertebral artery calibre in renal

and malignant hypertension. Pathological studies of cerebral arteries in hypertensive patients are described, and other chapters cover the sites of strokes in relation to hypertensive neurogenic factors and the concept that chronic renal hypertension, although initiated by renal ischaemia, is perpetuated by a reduction in blood supply to the hind brain caused by a constrictive effect of angiotensin on the medullary circulation. The third section of the book deals with other aspects of the hypothesis; the nature of the ischaemic stimulus to the vasomotor centre, malignant hypertension, and atheroma and high blood-pressure. There is a particularly good chapter on the relation of haemorrhage

to thrombosis and infarction, with convincing evidence that both are basically due to ischaemia, haemorrhage resulting from leakage of blood from collateral vessels into an infarct.

This is a remarkable book. Clear, challenging, and very well written, it sets a pattern of logical reasoning for all investigators. Instead of merely assembling a large amount of data and attempting to derive some message from it the author has chosen the far more difficult, but far more rewarding, method of hypothesizing and testing the hypotheses carefully step by step. The result is a work which places Dr. Dickinson in the forefront of clinical investigators. Even though experts may disagree with some of the conclusions drawn the book will provoke great interest and stimulate argument by its refreshing approach.

J. F. GOODWIN

Coronary-artery Surgery

Chirurgie des Coronaires. By G. Arnulf. (Pp. 389+vii; illustrated. 110 F.) Paris: Masson. 1965.

This volume on the surgery of the coronary arteries covers the whole field of investigation and treatment, as the book's subtitle implies. Dr. Arnulf has spent a great part of his professional life on this subject and himself made many valuable contributions. There is no doubt that he has covered the subject with very great care, as over fifty pages of references at the end show. The arrangement of chapter headings and subdivisions at the end of the book, as well as the index and references, the reviewer found cumbersome in use, but given time and application almost everything can be tracked down.

The first three chapters deal with the anatomy, physiology, and pathology of the coronary circulation and include detailed studies of the nerve supply and particularly the preaortic and subaortic plexuses, to knowledge of which Dr. Arnulf has made great contributions. He illustrates his points often with his own dissections.

Chapter IV is a valuable discussion of the localization of coronary lesions. Here, after mention of electrocardiographic changes, the author gives a full description of modern methods of coronary arteriography, with perhaps an understandable bias in favour of his own needle-puncture approach from above the clavicle in conjunction with transient acetylcholine arrest of the heart. Chapter V discusses all the known surgical procedures, both indirect and direct, entailing techniques such as disobliteration, patching, and grafting. Finally, and most important, Chapter VI summarizes the author's own views on the operation of choice in a particular case. He maintains in company with his colleagues all over the world that direct surgery on the

coronary arteries, although theoretically attractive, is applicable to only a relatively small number of cases at present and is still subject to disappointingly high mortality. Of the available methods he favours the insertion of a patch to increase the lumen with or without concomitant disobliteration done with great care. As to the indirect methods, he is on the side of simplicity and favours his own aortic plectomy or the simplest form of "cardio-myopericardiopexie" (his own word)—namely, pericardial poudrage with talc—and does not feel that any of the other methods have shown any significant advantage. These last two procedures can easily be combined at the same operation.

In summary, for the surgeon who is keen to enter this extremely difficult and often disappointing field this book is a valuable summary and guide, but it should also be regarded as a useful reference book for those whose interest is more occasional. The book is fairly well illustrated, but some of the drawings could well be enlarged and more detailed.

I. K. R. McMILLAN.

Handicapped Children

The Handicapped Child and His Home. By Mary D. Sheridan, O.B.E., M.A., M.D., D.C.H. (Pp. 63. 7s. 6d.) London: National Children's Home. 1965.

The list of those who have delivered the annual convocation lectures to the National Children's Home since it was first instituted in 1945 is most impressive and includes the names of many distinguished paediatricians, as well as those of psychologists, educationalists, and theologians. It has become the custom for these lectures to be published, and the latest one, by Dr. Mary D. Sheridan, has been expanded into an engaging essay of 63 pages. This is not a textbook, a

comprehensive reference source, nor even an essay of outstanding literary merit, but its pages throb with sincerity and testimony to the dedication with which Dr. Sheridan has devoted so much of her professional life to helping handicapped children.

Few of the doctors, teachers, and social workers who read this book—and it is to be hoped that many will do so—will be able to say that they have learnt anything new about the diagnosis and management of children suffering from various physical and mental handicaps. And there is no attempt in this lecture to deal comprehensively with rarer types of learning defects, such as dyslexia and apraxia, which often demand special educational help. On the other hand, it would not be easy to find elsewhere in so short a compass so clear a statement of the basic needs of normal and handicapped children and of the many problems posed by the handicapped. Dr. Sheridan considers these in turn under the headings of early identification, complete assessment, prompt treatment, parent guidance, suitable education, follow-up and periodic reassessment, and final placement in the community or in special care. As Dr. Sheridan points out, Great Britain can justly be proud of its past record in caring for those children who are mentally or physically disabled; but a great deal must still be done and this lecture points the way.

JOHN N. WALTON.

Preclinical Anatomy

Introduction to Anatomy. By Roger Warwick, B.Sc., Ph.D., M.D. (Pp. 230+ix; illustrated. 12s 6d.) London: Newnes. 1965.

This book sets out to present the outlines of anatomy and as such is ideal for the medical student embarking on his preclinical studies. It provides a scaffolding on which

he can build his knowledge of the subject. To the student anatomy is a new language, and unless he has a classical background a puzzling language. Professor Warwick, however, with each new word he presents to his readers, supplies its meaning. This undoubtedly provides greater interest and understanding of the subject. In particular should be mentioned the first chapter on "Cells—the Units of Life." After discussing briefly the methods available for the study of cells the author describes the electron-microscopic appearance of a cell, the way a cell divides, and ends with an account of the nuclear code, thereby giving an overall comprehension of the structure and function of the cell.

The book provides sufficient embryological and teleological background to the organs or structure described to enhance our understanding of them; for example, it mentions the methods of respiration in plants, fishes, amphibians, and mammals and the methods of reproduction in these groups. It is a pity that the chapter on endocrine glands should be so short and devoid of diagrams. The hormones form an important aspect of well-being in Man and could profitably have been dealt with in more detail. In summary this book provides a short account of the anatomical structure combined with a simple account of physiological function.

W. J. HAMILTON.

Synopsis of Tropical Medicine

Synopsis of Clinical Tropical Medicine.
By Oscar Felsenfeld, M.D., M.Sc. (Pp. 378, \$9.25.) Saint Louis, Missouri: C. V. Mosby. 1965.

The contents of this small book, of some 340 pages, are almost exclusively restricted to those conditions conventionally regarded as tropical. Though the coverage within this field is wide, reference to some important aspects of it is very brief. The text is divided into sections which include the following: diseases due to bacteria (including the spirochaetoses, leptospiroses, and bartonellosis); to the rickettsias; to viruses; to parasites (protozoan and metazoan); and to mycotic infections. Other sections are devoted to unclassified infectious diseases (including granuloma venereum and rhinoscleroma); to poisonous plants and chemicals; to parasitic insects, poisonous bites, and animal bites; to the effects of heat; to nutritional disorders (including sprue); to anaemias; and finally to miscellaneous conditions (ainhum, keloids, kuru, leucoderma, and others). There are 40 excellent illustrations, the great majority of which have been reprinted from *Clinical Tropical Medicine*, edited by Gradwohl, Benitez Soto, and Felsenfeld and published in 1951.

The general approach to each disease, after an introduction to the appropriate section, is an account of its aetiology and epidemiology, its clinical course, the laboratory findings, the differential diagnosis, the prognosis, the treatment, and preventive methods that may be used against it. After each section is a very limited bibliography of recommended reading, and in this American literature greatly preponderates.

The information on the tropical diseases of South America is well presented and well illustrated. But in an attempt to cover so many conditions, both the common and the recondite, in so small a compass reference to the latter must necessarily be laconic; on some important aspects of the former information is so extremely brief that at times it is inadequate. For example, the whole of snake-bite is dealt with in less than half of one page without differentiation of the snakes, their venoms, or their toxic effects. Criticisms may be levelled against certain statements in various sections of the text. For the treatment of amoebiasis emetine in its accepted forms is accorded honourable mention, with serious warning against its toxicity, but there is no reference to the reputedly more effective, and less toxic, synthetic alternative dehydroemetine. In this particular context there is a categoric statement (p. 192) that "The supportive treatment of amoebiasis is of paramount importance," this being amplified by listing certain dietary and vitamin requirements; the validity of such an assertion is questionable. Similarly, the statement (p. 276) that "Sodium antimony gluconate (Pentostam) . . . may be tried in intestinal schistosomiasis" at best is misleading, as the pentavalent antimonials are usually considered to be of no value in the schistosomiasis; possibly the author had Triostam in mind. Medicinal treatment of the mycetomas (Madura foot) is not considered other than in a statement that "Broad-spectrum antibiotics may be tried" (p. 296); diamino-diphenyl sulphone by some is deemed worthy of trial in these conditions before, and after, more radical surgical measures are undertaken. Omissions of some importance include a failure to differentiate between mere hookworm infection, which is common, and true hookworm disease, which is very much less so. Absence of any reference to the really significant eosinophilia usually so evident in loiasis (not "loiasis") is to be regretted; this is most helpful in diagnosis during the considerable period before microfilariae are recognized in the blood to prove it. In the section on chemical poisons (2 pages) there is no mention of mustard oil, and epidemic dropsy passes unnoticed, though many lesser poisonings and allergic troubles are listed.

While this little book is both interesting and informative, one is left with the impression that its value has been lessened in the endeavour to make it encyclopaedic. The exclusion of the many brief, and essentially uninformative, references to so many minor or trivial conditions, and the use of the space so gained for more essential information, however condensed, on matters of real importance would much enhance its value.

A. R. D. ADAMS.

Rural Greece

Health and Healing in Rural Greece. Study of Three Communities. By Richard and Eva Blum. (Pp. 269 + viii. 60s.) Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1965.

The authors of this book, who are attached to the Institute for the Study of Human Problems at Stanford University, sought to find out how the structure of a primitive community and the views of its residents influence

healing methods and health conditions. What, in the setting of rural Greece, is the significance of the conflict between traditional folk-healing and modern medical technology?

In co-operation with the Greek Ministry of Health, they carried out what is described as the first Greek morbidity study in two peasant villages and one shepherd encampment, covering some 368 persons in all, the communities differing widely from one another in origin and way of life. In preliminary interviews 115 persons (31%) were reported by their families as "currently ill," while the number of persons found on subsequent physical examination to have diagnosable diseases or disorders was 184 (68%) of the 272 who presented themselves. The conditions most frequently found were malnutrition (11%), arthritis (8%), and high blood-pressure (6%). A local midwife estimated that about 40% of the local folk could not afford the medical care they needed. Others who could afford it would not pay the doctor because they expected him to work without payment; peasants considered money paid to a doctor as "wasted," preferring to spend it on clothes or other visible goods.

The Greek physician apparently ranks lower in community status than the teacher, the owner of the largest herd of cows, or even the police chief. Medical practice is not without its hazards; one doctor said that if he failed in diagnosis or treatment his own life was in danger. Not all illness treated finds its way to the doctor. There are many alternative sources of care, such as the wise women familiar with herb lore, and male folk-healers specializing in troubles of bones and joints. Many conditions are still attributed to the Evil Eye, capable of disabling targets as diverse as humans and locomotives. It may cause the bursting of men or beasts, the wandering navel, tears and sneezing, even death. This book affords a fascinating picture of life and illness under Spartan conditions. As the authors rightly conclude, health and education cannot advance very far while the general level of society remains backward.

T. FERGUSON.

Disk Lesions

Lumbar Disc Lesions. Pathogenesis and Treatment of Low Back Pain and Sciatica. 3rd edition. By J. R. Armstrong, M.D., M.Ch., F.R.C.S. Foreword by H. Osmond-Clarke, C.B.E., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 307 + xii; illustrated, 65s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1965.

This is the third edition of an outstanding work in a field which concerns almost every practitioner of medicine. That there is little change from previous editions is a testimony to the care with which the earlier work was produced. To your reviewer, who has been interested in lumbosacral abnormalities for almost 40 years, it is good to look back at one's own fumbling studies and to see how much has been clarified. In 1934, with the recognition of intervertebral disk protrusions as a cause of derangement of the lumbar spine, one's tendency was to emphasize that, whatever the underlying structural lesion, the chief factor causing symptoms was muscle spasm, seen so well in the compensatory deformities. This element is still not sufficiently recognized. Armstrong's work, how-