

stenosed or occluded arteries must of necessity transform the prognosis of the affliction. In fact we still possess inadequate information concerning the natural history of the untreated disease. At the end of each chapter there is a valuable and comprehensive list of leading references to original sources of information, and these are carefully classified. However, in future editions it might be wise to include some references in the text also in order to justify a number of the statements which are made, as it is not usually clear as to whether the authors are expressing their own views or are quoting and accepting the opinions of others.

Despite these minor criticisms, this short but detailed review is calculated to edify and to excite the interest of the relatively uninitiated; even to those familiar with the field it can confidently be recommended as a useful and short, if at times over-simplified, refresher course and reference source.

JOHN N. WALTON.

Indices in Vital Statistics

Health and Vital Statistics. By B. Benjamin, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.I.A., F.F.S. (Pp. 307; illustrated. £3 5s.) London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1968.

This book is in fact a revision of *Elements of Vital Statistics*, which was published in 1959. The form and approach of the earlier book have been retained. The subject matter has been presented in the same 19 sections and in the same order in both books. The bulk of the original text is unaltered, and the revision has included pruning of what the author considers to be inessential non-statistical texts and the extension of the chapters dealing with recent developments in the field of hospital records and community health records. The net result of the alterations has been to reduce the number of pages by 41.

The author notes the great rise in the use of computers in recent years and the serious misconceptions that are held, the worst being to treat the computer as an end rather than, as it should be, a means to an end. There is no doubt that accessibility of computers has led to unnecessary investigations with unwieldy questionnaires which have been designed with the main object of getting material to put on a computer. He could perhaps have been more critical of the modern trend in collecting data. The advent of the computer gave impetus to the school that advocates registration from the cradle to the grave. A great mass of figures are collected by various authorities which can never be used because they are not designed to answer any particular problem. Elaborate analyses repeated annually when the trend is known to be similar and where decennial analysis would suffice are to be deprecated, especially where we can observe the trend only and can do very little to influence the course—as in fertility, for example.

This book fulfils the object of helping those engaged in any kind of social, welfare, or public health services to understand the use and meaning of the various indices that are used in vital statistics. The reader who wishes to study any subject in greater detail

will find the list of references at the end of each chapter a useful guide for further reading. Entrants into the field of public health or social medicine could with profit find a place for this book on their bookshelf.

W. J. MARTIN.

Medical Driving Hazards

Medical Aspects of Fitness to Drive Vehicles. Report by the Medical Commission on Accident Prevention. (Pp. 52. 5s.)

The Medical Commission on Accident Prevention has produced this excellent booklet for the guidance of doctors called upon to advise on the fitness to drive of persons with various disabilities. The nine chapters, by experts in the different fields, end with suggestions for advice to patients. It is clear that information on medical driving hazards is scanty and that it is likely to remain difficult to gather. Striking examples are the inaccuracy of statements by those suffering from epilepsy or those taking anti-histaminic or tranquillizing drugs. In writing of the commonest hazard of all, coronary artery disease, the authors remark that, with a few exceptions, a driver usually has sufficient warning of an attack to stop before being concerned in a collision. The real danger of diabetes is the insulin reaction, which may arise when traffic conditions or shift work interfere with balanced carbohydrate intake. The more obvious ocular defect is easily assessed, and it is not considered that many accidents are due to faulty vision.

This book breaks new ground; it is concise, brief, and authoritative. The authors recommend strict examination of professional drivers, in whom they would require a high standard of fitness. Although present evidence suggests that medical conditions in a driver are responsible for a small proportion of accidents, many of these are, if not remediable, detectable. More than half the children now born will be injured in a road accident and one in fifty will lose his life. In assessing the risk to others of a driver with a disability this report gives the practitioner some guidance which has hitherto been lacking.

GAVIN THURSTON.

Willis on Tumours

Pathology of Tumours. Fourth edition. By R. A. Willis, D.Sc., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., F.R.A.C.P., Hon. LL.D.(Glasg.). (Pp. 1019 +xiv +41; illustrated. £7 15s.) London: Butterworths. 1968.

The last edition of this standard work was in 1960, and since then there have been sufficient advances in tumour pathology to require considerable additions and alterations. This new edition has been extensively revised. In the preface Professor Willis lists 13 major revisions, including experimental carcinogenesis, viruses and tumours, mammary fibroadenomas, nasal tumours, bronchial "adenomas," ovarian, endometrial,

and thymic tumours, leukaemias, melanomas, mesotheliomas, lymphangiosarcomas, and gonadal tumours. These are the major changes, but in fact there are changes of greater or lesser degree in every chapter even if only the addition of a new reference or two. In fact over 1,100 new references have been added. The actual cases which Willis quotes and usually illustrates are now filed along with many others in the tumour reference collection at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. In each case quoted in this edition the reference number is given, so that sceptical readers can consult the detailed records and see the sections. I can well imagine Willis himself doing this, but I have grave doubts about his readers doing so.

This remains a very personal work. Willis states what he thinks the evidence is and what opinion he draws from it; an opinion that is sometimes at variance with the majority of workers. When he changes his opinion, as he has done on several issues, he says so. On the whole he errs on the side of excessive caution or scepticism. Of course it is right to demand that newly recognized tumours be properly established before being accepted, but I think the time has come to admit that mesotheliomas and Ewing's tumour do exist and to offer some indication about how to recognize them—the presence of glycogen in the latter, for instance, is not mentioned. I think too that the alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma of young people is a sufficiently well-recognized entity to deserve a description to itself. I think it is a pity to imply that fibrosis is a character of the later stages of Hodgkin's disease when it is in fact a character of the early stages of certain types, and in the late stages is often the result of therapy.

These are perhaps carping criticisms; it is impossible for any man to be so expert on all tumours that he satisfies all critics. Besides, the great virtue of this book has always been its accurate information about histogenesis and behaviour rather than the histological diagnosis of tumours. This edition of Willis' pathology of tumours remains as good as its predecessors, which means that it is essential for pathologists and very desirable for surgeons and radiotherapists.

C. V. HARRISON.

Oesophago-gastric Junction

The Cardia and Hiatus Hernia. By H. Daintree Johnson, M.D., M.Chir.(Cantab.), F.R.C.S. (Pp. 103 +xii; illustrated. £1 10s.) London: William Heinemann (Medical Books) Ltd. 1968.

A monograph is an excellent means by which an expert who has devoted considerable thought and effort to the investigation of a particular problem can expound his views, and this 100-page book on the cardia and hiatus hernia by Mr. Daintree Johnson is a fine example of this type of communication. He outlines the orderly sequence of evidence both from experimental animal work and from observations in human patients which led him, step by step, to his present day views on the physiological factors which

normally ensure competence of the oesophago-gastric junction against reflux, and the principal disorders of these physiological processes which cause oesophageal reflux and hiatus hernia. The story unfolds in an interesting and persuasive manner, and the direct personal and at times almost emotional presentation of the author's views makes for easy reading.

The major concepts are all argued primarily from engineering and simple physical principles which are clearly enunciated at the beginning of the book. Each major point is powerfully backed up by critical observations from a range of experimental animal preparations, from radiological studies of both the normal and abnormal, and from assessment of different types of surgical treatment for hiatus hernia. Particularly convincing are the cogent arguments in favour of a prime role for the intra-abdominal portion of the oesophagus in preventing reflux, and also the physical explanation of why a small hiatus hernia would be more likely to have a greater amount of reflux than a large hernia. The lack of appreciable thickening of the musculature at the lower end of the oesophagus has often been put forward as an argument against the existence of a true sphincter at this area. Mr. Daintree Johnson, however, very convincingly proposes that the strength of the muscular contraction required to empty the oesophagus is so much greater than that normally required for prevention of reflux that there is therefore no need for any localized thickening for efficient sphincteric action. Perhaps the weakest arguments are those seeking to explain on a mechanical basis the large number of associated conditions which are believed to be related with hiatus hernia. In some "spasm" of the longitudinal muscle of the oesophagus is blamed for initiating the

organic hernial defect. It is always, of course, difficult to be certain about the role of spasm. The only other criticism which might be made of this little volume is that the quality of the numerous x rays, particularly those of the otherwise excellent animal studies, is not always good enough for a clear demonstration of the points being made.

Whether all the clearly presented hypotheses prove to be right or wrong, there is no question that this monograph displays a very high order of inquiry into what is an important clinical subject. It is likely that controversy about hiatus hernia will continue, but very real progress is being made in our understanding of the problems, and this type of serious, critical, diligent pursuit of answers to logical practical questions makes an important contribution. Every reviewer of medical books must now surely either publicly or privately bemoan the price. This slim volume is certainly well produced, but it is a pity that it has to cost 30s. for 100 small pages.

IAIN E. GILLESPIE.

The Acute Abdomen

The Early Diagnosis of the Acute Abdomen. 13th edition. Edited by Sir Zachary Cope, B.A., M.D.(Lond.), F.R.C.S.(Eng.). (Pp. 202; illustrated. 28s.) London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

In 1921 a young surgeon published a slim book that preached early and accurate diagnosis of acute abdominal pain, stressed the importance of scrupulous clinical assessment, and decried procrastination. The preface to this book stated, "it would appear that there is room for a small book dealing solely with the early diagnosis of such cases, for there is little need to labour the truism that earlier

diagnosis means better prognosis." It is a great pleasure to welcome, now nearly half a century later, the thirteenth edition of this classic and to congratulate Sir Zachary on his boyish energy in keeping his textbook ever fresh for yet a further generation of surgeons. Literally tens of thousands of housemen and registrars must now have been reared on these clear lessons set out in faultless prose, and one can but guess how much suffering has been averted and, indeed, how many lives have been saved because of the teachings preached in this small volume.

The new edition shows that fashions in disease change. *Tabes* is now a rarity whereas *diverticulitis* is becoming increasingly common. Similarly, acute abdominal pain due to tropical conditions is more and more likely to be seen in these islands. There have been suitable alterations in the emphasis of the text to accommodate to these new conditions. The influence of the therapeutic use of adrenal steroids on the symptoms of acute abdominal disease is discussed and a new section on the value of paracentesis of the abdomen in some cases of abdominal injury and disease has been added. Here and there one comes across tests and procedures now seldom used; thus few surgeons today pay much attention to testing for abdominal hyperaesthesia; and I have never seen Loewi's mydriatic test employed in a suspected case of pancreatitis. These are, however, minor points in a book which is well supplied with references to recent publications.

If previous records are anything to go on, we can anticipate that the fourteenth edition of this standard text should appear on its fiftieth anniversary in 1971. No doubt Sir Zachary is already hard at work collecting material for this Golden Jubilee.

HAROLD ELLIS.

Books Received

Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.

The Gold-Headed Cane. By William Macmichael. (Pp. 179; illustrated. £4.) London: The Royal College of Physicians, 1968.

The Surgical Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis. By Robert L. Preston, M.D. (Pp. 579+xiii; illustrated. £10.) Philadelphia, London, Toronto: W. B. Saunders Co. 1968.

Medical Plans and Health Care. By Jerome L. Schwartz, Dr.P.H. (Pp. 349+xxxiii; illustrated. \$16.75.) Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1968.

A Symposium on Carbenoxolone Sodium. Edited by J. M. Robson and F. M. Sullivan. (Pp. 263+xiv; illustrated. No price given.) London: Butterworths, 1968.

Tuberculosis Control in Developing Countries. By D. H. Shennan, M.D. (Pp. 136+viii; illustrated. £1 1s.) Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1968.

Comprehensive Medical Care and Teaching. A Report on the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center Program. Edited by George G. Reader, M.D., and Mary E. W. Goss, Ph.D. Assisted by Barbara Kersch, M.D. (Pp. 391+xvi. £5 4s. 6d.) Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967. London: Oxford University Press.

Resuscitation. A Programmed Course. By Leonard P. Caccamo, M.D., Edward Kessler, M.D., and J. Leonard Azneer, Ph.D. (Pp. 113+vii; illustrated. £1 3s. 6d.) Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co. 1968.

Hereditary Disorders of Erythrocyte Metabolism. Edited by Ernest Beutler, M.D. (Pp. 343+xii; illustrated. \$9.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton, 1968.

Foetal and Neonatal Physiology. A Comparative Study of the Changes at Birth. By Geoffrey S. Dawes, D.M. (Pp. 247; illustrated. £5 3s.) Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc. 1968.

Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System. 4th edition. By Sheila Sherlock, M.D.(Edin.), F.R.C.P., F.R.C.P.E., F.A.C.P.(Hon.). (Pp. 809+xxi; illustrated. £5 5s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1968.

Injuries of the Eye, the Lids, and the Orbit. Diagnosis and Management. By David Paton, M.D., F.A.C.S., and Morton F. Goldberg, M.D. (Pp. 161+xv; illustrated. £2.) Philadelphia, London, Toronto: W. B. Saunders Co. 1968.

How to Interpret Electrocardiograms in Terms of Vectors. By Emanuel Goldberger, M.D., F.A.C.P. (Pp. 187+xiv; illustrated. \$10.50.) Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1968.

Foot and Ankle Pain. By Rene Gaillet, M.D. (Pp. 148+ix; illustrated. £1 8s.) Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co. 1968.

Immunity to Parasites. Sixth Symposium of the British Society for Parasitology. Edited by Angela E. R. Taylor. (Pp. 118+vii; illustrated. £1 17s. 6d.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1968.

The Cultivation of Parasites in Vitro. By Angela E. R. Taylor, B.Sc., Ph.D., and J. R. Baker, B.Sc., Ph.D., M.I.Biol. (Pp. 377+xiii; illustrated. £3 10s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1968.

Endokarditis. Klinik, Aetiologie, Pathogenese, Therapie. Edited by Felix Anschütz. (Pp. 264+x; illustrated. DM. 59.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag, 1968.

Orthopaedics for the Undergraduate. By W. A. Crabbe, M.D., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 314+v; illustrated. £1 12s.) London: William Heinemann (Medical Books) Ltd. 1968.

Pathology of Leukemia. By George D. Amromin, M.D., F.A.C.P. (Pp. 448+x; illustrated. \$26.50.) New York: Harper & Row, Hoeber Medical Division, 1968.

Cold Spring Harbor Symposia on Quantitative Biology. Volume XXXII, Antibodies. Edited by Leonora Frisch. (Pp. 619+xix; illustrated. \$20.) New York: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory of Quantitative Biology, 1967.

Methods in Cancer Research. Volume IV. Edited by Harris Busch. (Pp. 673+xv; illustrated. £15 17s. 4d.) New York and London: Academic Press, 1968.