

Book Reviews

Skin complications of vaccination against smallpox. Recording by DR ERIC WADDINGTON. The College Medical Recording Service and Sound Library.

During the smallpox outbreak of 1962, about 900,000 people were vaccinated in South Wales. Dr E. Waddington, a consultant dermatologist to the Cardiff Group of hospitals, was closely associated with this outbreak and grasped this unique opportunity, not only of studying the dermatological complications of smallpox, but also the many skin complications following vaccination.

In this lecture, he describes 242 patients with skin complications following smallpox vaccination. He stresses the dangers of mass vaccination, when patients are exposed to the unnecessary risks of severe complications and, in some cases, as serious as smallpox itself. The most serious of these is eczema vaccinatum, a complication which caused the death of two of his patients. This catastrophe can be avoided by not vaccinating those who suffer from eczema nor their immediate contacts, for fear of accidental vaccination. Another serious complication is anaphylactoid purpura which caused serious renal damage in four of the speaker's cases. In vaccination during pregnancy, there is a risk of inducing foetal vaccinia not only in the first trimester, as is commonly recognized, but also in the latter months of pregnancy when foetal death can occur.

This is a tape admirably suited for group discussion, which could bring in such controversial topics as mass vaccination of the general population during smallpox outbreaks, routine vaccination of children, vaccination during pregnancy and the vaccination of overseas travellers.

Anyone who carries out vaccination against smallpox, is recommended to listen to this lecture. Dr Waddington is a good speaker and illustrates his talk with 32 excellent 35 mm. colour slides.

Price's textbook of the practice of medicine. Tenth edition. Edited by SIR RONALD BODLEY SCOTT, K.C.V.O., D.M., F.R.C.P. London. Oxford University Press. 1966. Pp. xiv + 1259. Price 90s.

The latest edition of this famous textbook has several welcome innovations. There is a two column lay-out, which should make for easier and quicker reading, and references to review articles are included after each section. The criticism that it takes ten years for a new advance to find its way into a textbook can hardly be said to hold true here, as almost half

the references are for 1960 and after, including a number for 1964 and even 1965!

Not surprisingly there are some minor omissions in the field of recent progress. Frusemide and indomethacin have arrived on the scene too late for inclusion. In the section on cardiac infarction there is no reference to the use of serum transaminase tests as a diagnostic aid, although the fact that levels are raised in myocardial infarction is mentioned in passing in the section on liver diseases. 'Poisoning by pesticides' in the index refers to an excellent account of poisoning by organo-phosphorus compounds but with no mention of poisoning by DNOC, also a pesticide, which is indexed separately. It would have been better if both had been dealt with together in the text, or cross-indexed, in view of the fact that atropine, used in the treatment of organo-phosphorus poisoning, may prove fatal in patients suffering from DNOC poisoning. The article on affective disorders mentions the new MAO inhibitors and the fact that their use is attended by 'serious risks'. No mention is made of what these risks are nor of how they may be reduced by the avoidance of certain drugs and articles of diet. None of the references given after this section are later than 1959.

The index of 'Price' has always been a happy hunting ground for collectors of eponyms and seekers after the obscure and the exotic. Despite the loss of some old friends it still fulfils this function admirably. There is an undeniable aura about such entries as Congo maggot fly infection, Siberian plague, Kaffir-pox, Kyasanur forest disease, and even human bot infection (no connection with napkin rash!) There are, however, a few disappointing gaps. Under 'C' there are no fewer than five references to cancrum oris but no entry for chromosome or chromosomal abnormalities (although these are referred to in the text where relevant), Likewise in the 'Gs' genes and genetics are not indexed but "galloping consumption" is!

All in all, the new 'Price' should fulfill the hope expressed by the editor in his preface that it "will continue to present a convenient and comprehensive survey of the art and science of contemporary British medicine". At 90 shillings it is very reasonably priced and the new format should make it more attractive to those who have been put off by the rather forbidding exterior of previous editions.

Textbook of medical treatment. Tenth edition. Various authors. Edited by SIR DERRICK DUNLOP, B.A., M.B., F.R.C.P., and STANLEY ALSTEAD, C.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1966. Pp. xvii+1003. Price 70s.

The tenth edition two years after the ninth. There is little need to say more. Several new authors have rewritten sections but the plan remains the same. The chapter on corticosteroids has gone, it being contended that this now standard treatment of so many diseases, is well enough covered in the other sections of the book. The volume has increased by 24 pages and the price by only five shillings.