

Book Reviews

An Introduction to Medical Genetics. J. FRASER ROBERTS, M.A., M.D., D.SC., F.R.C.P. Second edition, London: Oxford University Press. 1959. Pp. xii + 263. Illustrated. Price 35/-.

A knowledge of the mechanism of inheritance is necessary to all practitioners of medicine; to the family doctor it is of vital importance. Unfortunately, a science which is still young, gathers to it a rapidly enlarging literature, and with fresh knowledge come fresh perplexities; perhaps to cover up the lack of understanding of these almost as quickly a jargon grows. The science of genetics is no exception; each new conception throws off fresh words and old ones acquire new meanings. Inevitably the occasional reader becomes bemused.

Dr Fraser Roberts has contrived in a masterly manner to skate round these difficulties. He discards unproductive terminologies and is dogmatic in defining the terms he uses. This is indeed an excellent book, beautifully produced, well and graphically illustrated, and miraculously lucid. The last chapter is devoted to the subject of genetic prognosis and will be found not only useful but comforting to all those who have to advise on this most difficult subject.

Antibiotic and Sulphonamide Treatment: A Short Guide for Practitioners. A. R. ANSCOMBE, M.S., F.R.C.S., A. D. BROWN, M.B., M.M.S.A., M.R.C.O.G., and D. M. DAVIES, M.R.C.P. Edited by M. E. FLOREY, M.D. Oxford University Press. 1959. Pp. x + 150. Price (in U.K. only), 10/6.

This little book (it really does fit in the pocket!) provides a comprehensive review of the antibiotics in clinical use up to the time of publication and also of the various sulphonamides. Initially, the various drugs, their uses, limitations, and toxic effects, as well as the general principles underlying their action, are described. The major portion of the text is then devoted to the treatment of the various diseases responding to antibiotic or sulphonamide therapy, including all conditions likely to be met with in practice. The drugs recommended for each condition are given in order of preference, and the rationale behind this preference is clearly and fully explained. The whole book is thoroughly practical in outlook and, despite the necessary compression, is quite readable.

A minor criticism is that little mention is made of the relative cost of the various drugs described, and a table of the proprietary equivalents of the various official preparations would have been of use.

This book fulfils a definite need and is thoroughly recommended.