

## *Book Reviews*

**A Laboratory Guide to Clinical Diagnosis.** R. D. EASTHAM, B.A., M.D., D.C.P. DIPL. PATH., M.C. PATH., and B. R. POLLARD, M.A., M.B., B.CHIR, M.C. PATH. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1964. Pp. viii + 252. Price 18s. 6d.

This pocket-size book packs between its paper covers a vast amount of information on the laboratory aspects of a wide range of conditions—from abortion to Zollinger-Ellison syndrome. To do this in the space available, the authors make free use of abbreviations (a useful list of which appears at the beginning), Eponyms (many of which are not explained), and bald verbless statement. This does not make for easy reading.

An attempt has been made to indicate for each disease the relative merits of tests in diagnosis and treatment, using five categories. The diagnosis of disease does not commonly rest on a pathognomonic test (group 1) but on the results of several, and in these groups the various tests appear in a rather haphazard fashion. The balance between what is possible and what is practical is occasionally a little strained—that the marrow plasmacell count may be increased in roseola infantum may not seem very relevant to some of us. Because it presupposes a degree of responsibility in the use of the laboratory, this is not a book for the enthusiastic house physician who would be the justification for the general practitioner as “the specialist in anti-specialization” (McKenzie Lecture, 1964).

The approach, viewing the problem in terms of disease entities, in hindsight, as it were, limits the value of this book for the general practitioner, who, more than any other clinician, has to work from a welter of symptomatology onwards.

Despite these criticisms, the authors are to be congratulated on trying to foster “closer co-operation and understanding, with mutual stimulation of interest between clinical specialists, general practitioners and clinical pathologists”.

**Diseases of Women by Ten Teachers** under the direction of F. W. ROQUES, C.B.E., M.D., M.Chir., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. Eleventh edition. London. Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd. 1964. Pp. ix + 576. Price 50s.

In the course of years since its first edition in 1919 this book has run through ten previous editions and 22 printings in all. This alone not only proves its worth and popularity but establishes it firmly as a standard textbook for students and a work of gynaecological reference for the family doctor. One might well add to the title “a conjoined textbook from ten hospitals”. The new addition has been divided into 12 sections and new chapters have been added on the determination of sex including intersex and on radiotherapy in gynaecology.

This is a good book for the general practitioner. It contains the basis of gynaecology and covers all one who does not intend to specialize in the subject should need to know. The text is clear and lucid and the  
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book which runs to some 550 pages contains over 200 illustrations. Conditions are generally discussed under the essential headings of definition, cause, pathology, symptoms, signs, diagnosis and treatment and where the headings are not specifically given these factors are there in the correct order. It is satisfying to find that treatment is described clearly and adequately. There are most excellent chapters on dysfunctional uterine bleeding, on hormone therapy and on dysmenorrhoea. These three chapters alone are of sufficient value to the family doctor to make the book worthy of a place on his shelves. How often does a day go by in which he does not have occasion to treat one or the other? Sterility seems a rather inadequate title for a chapter on those patients who have difficulty in conception. Sterility and subfertility would be a more accurate and more descriptive term particularly as it covers absolute sterility, relative sterility and subfertility.

It is very satisfying for one who has known many editions of this work to study this latest edition, though one does wonder which teacher dealt with which subject.

**The Medical Annual 1964.** Edited by Sir RONALD BODLEY SCOTT, *K.C.V.O., M.A., D.M., F.R.C.P.*, and R. MILNES WALKER, *C.B.E., M.S., F.R.C.S.* Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1964. Pp. xxiv + 552. Price 50s.

The *Medical Annual* this year follows the same style as its immediate forerunners. The special articles cover medical considerations in air travel, the *British Pharmacopoeia*, and auto-immunity as a cause of disease. These are all interesting, well-written articles, topical and informative. In the general articles the growing points of medicine are well described—artificial pacing in heart block, pseudo-gout, and infectious mononucleosis have useful notes. There are short monographs on hypnosis in labour, the laboratory diagnosis of pregnancy and skin markers of malignancy. The section on legal decisions and legislation is also valuable.

The *Medical Annual* remains the most concise and easiest reference book on medical progress for the general practitioner.

**Uses of Epidemiology.** Second edition. J. N. MORRIS, *D.SC., F.R.C.P., D.P.H.*, Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Pp. viii + 338. Price 40s.

The second edition is improved by much new material though the intention remains the same, namely to show those in both clinical and preventive medicine the usefulness of epidemiology in the widest sense. The chapter headings give a clue to the way Professor Morris develops his argument. After a brief introduction and a historical review come chapters on community diagnosis, community health and the working of health services. Then after a short chapter on individual risks and chances come the three long chapters which develop the main argument of this stimulating book: Completing the Picture, Identification of Syndromes and In Search of Causes.

The book does not end here. There is a useful short recapitulation of the whole, followed by 16 tables in the Appendix with classical examples