
BOOK REVIEWS


This book ranges from a guide to student techni- cians about to take their final examination on haematology to one which can be regarded as an up-to-date practical laboratory guide for all grades of hospital laboratory workers. An amazing amount of detail is included and there is virtually no padding. The accent throughout is on tried and proven technical methods, and repeated warnings are given against accepting results without full knowledge of the normal variations in health and the limit of error in the technique.

Although the ranges for absolute values are given, the term “absolute value” is deliberately placed between inverted commas and a warning is given against any delusion of absoluteness.

Outstanding in the whole book are the chapters on the tests for investigating cases of haemolytic anaemia and clotting defects, and these bring the reader right up to date. On the other hand, the chapter on miscellaneous tests is naturally disjointed and rather brief. One minor criticism only occurs to the reviewer, and that is the rather large number of references in a work of this character; 62 references occupying three and a half pages to a chapter on haemolytic anaemias seems over-generous, and even the last mixed chapter of eight pages has 26 references. The book maintains the high technical standard of J. & A. Churchill and is deservedly already the standard textbook on practical haematology in this country. At 20s. it is wonderful value.

A. Gordon Signy.


This small book reports, in the manner which is now so familiar, a meeting between a group of people with basically similar interests in the blood flow in small vessels. The discussion which follows each paper is rather more formal than is usual, and perhaps this is no loss.

Most of the papers deal with direct observations on the blood flow in vessels, mainly using techniques which have been elaborated particularly by E. R. Clark (the chamber technique) and Melvin Knisely (the quartz rod technique).

The type of investigation which is reported in these papers is as yet in its infancy, and it seems certain that a great mass of new observations, which can be obtained in no other way, will eventually be made by the use of these methods.

This book, and the report of the previous confer- ence, can be wholeheartedly recommended to all who are interested in the circulation, either normal or pathological. The field is little studied by the clinical pathologist, but it is unlikely that anyone could put down this book without having had to revise his outlook on various points of the pathology of the circulation.

P. M. Daniel.


This is a book written by a surgeon who obviously has a vast experience of his subject, and it will appeal primarily to surgeons. This is not to say that it has no interest for pathologists, for the pages are full of facts and refreshing ideas which will stimulate any medical reader. Indeed it is particularly useful for pathologists to be able to view the problems through the eyes of a surgeon who has so often been confronted with the diagnostic and therapeutic problems peculiar to the biliary tract, the liver, and the pancreas.

The author sets out to review present knowledge and hypotheses in the classical sequence of anatomy, physiology, and pathology, continuing with chapters on the clinical manifestations, laboratory observations, medical management, anaesthesia, and some 120 pages on details of surgical treatment. There is a useful chapter on radiology, and the radiographic reproductions are above the normal standard. In the section on anatomy there are five pages of possible abnormalities, but the role of ammonia in acute yellow atrophy is not mentioned in the chapter on pathology. It is interesting to see a special section on the post-cholecystectomy syndrome and another on bile peritonitis. In tune with his essentially practical approach Mr. Sterling has good advice to offer to pathologists on the advisability of adequate fixation before fine dissection of the biliary tract can be undertaken.

The chapters on pathology and laboratory observa- tions are sound, and they are extensive for a book written from a surgical point of view. The photo- micrographs are not very satisfactory, but the coloured plates are entertaining. There are aphorisms which must surely please the clinical pathologist: “One good feel of the liver is worth two liver function tests” is followed by “Laboratory findings
confirm but do not establish the diagnosis.” The style is concise and racy with many unusual and pleasing similes.

The index is good, and there is a vast number of references in which the British literature is not ignored, but one would have liked to see some acknowledgment of the work of Dr. Sheila Sherlock. And who would recognize the Grand Old Man of English medicine as “Horder, L.”?

A. G. MARSHALL.


The editor in his introduction admits that this Year Book will give the reader a picture of the pattern of pathology through his eyes. The picture is certainly very alive, and most of the subjects and papers chosen for inclusion are, as is to be expected, newer work and newer concepts arising in the past year. Most aspects of pathology find a corner, and if a busy pathologist wishes to obtain a quick paint-brush sketch of the year’s publication in pathology this book provides such a picture. Anyone interested in a particular subject will naturally not obtain satisfaction as this book is not intended to cater for the expert. I keep it as bedside reading, thus maintaining an interest in many aspects of pathological routine and research.

A. GORDON SIGNY.


This is a reprint in book form of the articles in Medicine (Vol. 33) published in 1954. It is a careful analysis of the clinical and pathological features of the disease as seen in 138 cases of systemic lupus erythematosus including 32 cases published in 1949. The diagnosis was confirmed in every case either by post-mortem examination, by the finding of L.E. cells, or by the histology of biopsy material, and the relative value of the last two and other diagnostic features is discussed.

The section dealing with the pathology of this condition is concise and authoritative, but references to diagnostic investigations are made throughout the book. Forty-two short case histories are given, being inserted in the text where they illustrate and support a particular statement. All aspects are carefully and adequately described from views on aetiology, the clinical, haematological, and biochemical manifestations to treatment and prognosis. A short section deals with the significance of the “biological false positive” serological tests for syphilis in relation to disseminated lupus erythematosus.

There is a plethora of abbreviations by initi’s such as B.F.P., A.S.A., S.L.E., T.E.M., and so forth which may be rather irritating to the British reader. The book ends with a list of no less than 280 references employing the admirable American rule of giving the titles of each article, and a number of papers from the British literature are quoted.

This is an excellent reference book and must surely be most useful to any clinical pathologist. Unfortunately, there is no index, an omission due to the fact that the book is reprinted from a journal, but a lengthy table of contents with headings of subsections goes far to obviate this disadvantage. At this price the amount of information available in it should ensure a wide sale of this excellent book.

A. G. MARSHALL.


In this well-written second edition the author continues his crusade for early diagnosis and treatment of cancer of the female genital organs. He discusses the problems of malignant disease as a whole, and though primarily clinical the subject includes the systematic pathology of each organ as well as the incidence and aetiology. The exposition of the aetiology of endometrial carcinoma is well done; the chapter heading has been changed from carcinoma of the body of the uterus. There is also an extensive description of cervical carcinoma, but one questionable conclusion is reached that the diagnosis (pathological) of cancer in situ of the cervix is “intuitive.” The author's approach to cancer of the ovary is individualistic and there are several instances of repetition. The pathology of ovarian tumours is summarized, but the schematic representation and telegraphic explanatory notes to the author's legend add little to elucidate the admittedly complicated problem of histogenesis. The determination of malignancy of ovarian tumours by frozen section at operation is rightly regarded as unreliable.

Each chapter has a full and useful bibliography complete with titles of articles, brought up to date with the new edition. The format has been altered; the headings are better set out, which makes easier reading, though it would seem that the section on “supplementary treatment” has been misplaced. Spelling errors are commendably few; it is confusing to read the name of Gartner spelt also as Gartner and Gaertner.

This book will be a useful aid to the pathologist who deals with gynaecological material, but its chief value is to the gynaecologist who can benefit from the authoritative experience of the author.

MAGNUS HAINES.