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Book reviews

MUIR'S TEXTBOOK OF PATHOLOGY 8th edition. Revised by D. F. Cappell. (Pp. xv + 871; illustrated. 100s.) London: Edward Arnold. 1964.

The appearance of this eighth edition of Muir's Textbook celebrates fittingly the centenary of the birth of the original author on 5 July 1864. The evolutionary process which has been evident in each succeeding edition is perhaps more marked than on former occasions, for both the physical form and the material have been completely revised. The volume has changed from the familiar 'chubby' appearance to a larger page, but more slender figure, printed with two columns to the page on a glossy paper which shows off the illustrations to better advantage. Compared with the second (1929) edition which the reviewer has kept from student days, the weight has risen from 1,440 g. to 2,180 g., an increase of some 50%, but the increase over the seventh edition is a mere 40 g.!

Revision of the contents has been as thorough as that of the form. There has been extensive rearrangement of the material, but the system adopted in earlier volumes with seven chapters on general aspects, followed by 14 on special or systematic pathology has been retained. The revision has been remarkably successful in fitting in a sufficiency of discussion on new and changing views with so little increase in bulk, and this has of course been attained by pruning and compression of the descriptions of certain aspects and diseases which seem less important to us today. An excellent new chapter on histopathology of the skin will be welcomed, not only by the undergraduates to whom the book is primarily directed, but also by pathologists, young and old alike.

Professor Cappell has not allowed his personal concern with morbid anatomy and histopathology to exclude due emphasis being given to chemical, microbiological, and immunological aspects of disease processes, while the bibliography makes sensible recommendations for further reading of up-to-date monographs in all these fields.

A reviewer feels under some obligation to search out some points for unfavourable criticism, but in the present case this is not easy. Perhaps a little more might have been said about tissue reactions to viruses and ionizing radiations, but no doubt the light treatment of these subjects was dictated by considerations of space. The final result is a splendidly balanced textbook which can be unreservedly recommended, not only to the undergraduate during the whole of his clinical course, but also to the house officer and trainee pathologist both of whom will find it an invaluable aid in working up their cases.

Although older graduates can still identify patches of Sir Robert Muir's prose amongst the pages, and although Professor Cappell has availed himself freely of the assistance and advice of specialist colleagues, this is essentially now a one-man textbook. As such it prompts thoughts as to the feasibility of such books in future. The benefits of a unified approach, in contrast to the variable

attitudes evident in even the best of 'multiple-author' books, are here well displayed; but the breadth of knowledge demanded is becoming rarer, and the sheer effort involved must be, to say the least, formidable. There is no doubt that in this edition Professor Cappell has set a standard which will be hard to rival.

T. CRAWFORD

GENERAL PATHOLOGY By J. B. Walter and M. S. Israel. (Pp. xii + 937; illustrated. 100s.) London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1963.

This book has been written, not as an undergraduate introduction to pathology, but for postgraduate students, and in particular for those preparing for postgraduate examinations such as the primary F.R.C.S. and F.F.A. It sets out to cover the general principles of pathology using the term pathology in its broad and proper sense. Hence the principles of microbiology, biochemistry, and haematology are included, and their clinical applications are emphasized more than in most books. Indeed the authors stress in their preface that they are writing for a clinical audience, and this certainly modifies their presentation. Hence it would scarcely be fair to criticize the book from the standpoint of the undergraduate.

The arrangement of subject matter is rather curious. Fever is discussed some five hundred pages later than body response to inflammation, whilst the section on tumours is inserted between that on inflammation and the basic vascular disturbances. There is no table of illustrations, though in general these are good. Some of the diagrams are over-elaborate. Perhaps its greatest fault for the postgraduate student is in the list of references for further reading. Too many of these are leading articles in the *British Medical Journal* or *Lancet*. There are relatively few to the original papers. Many statements in the book are terse, and further reading should have helped to provide the understanding on which they are based. Nevertheless this is a useful book which serves its purpose. It will be of great value to the postgraduate student preparing for examinations. To the clinician who knows his pathology it will serve as a useful source for rapid revision.

J. HENRY BIGGART

DISORDERS OF BLOOD AND BLOOD-FORMING ORGANS IN CHILDHOOD By H. S. Baar, S. Baar, K. B. Rogers and E. Stransky. (Pp. x + 902; 133 figures, 136 tables. S.Fr./DM. 230.) Basel: S. Karger A.G.

This multi-author book has, as the chapter headings tell us, been written very largely by Dr. H. S. Baar, and it may be looked upon as a distillation of his wide-ranging knowledge and experience in the fields of haematology and pathology. The book is a very large one, and the present reviewer can appreciate the very great difficulties that Dr. Baar must have been faced with in achieving its completion. He has, in his own chapters, valiantly