

RES MEDICA

Journal of the Royal Medical Society



Book Reviews

Abstract

- CLINICAL RESEARCH FOR ALL Cyril Maxwell Cambridge Medical Publications Ltd. (1973) Price £2.85p
- A COMPANION TO MEDICAL STUDIES Editors-in-Chief: R. Massmore and J. S. Robson Vol. 3, parts 1 and Oxford; Blackwell Scientific Publication- £11.50 each part (£8.00 paper-back)
- CHEMOTAXIS AND INFLAMMATION P.C. Wilkinson Churchill Livingstone 1974. £4.00
- THOMSON'S CONCISE MEDICAL DICTIONARY William A.R. Thomson, M.D. Churchill Livingstone, 1973. £1.80
- CLINICAL EXAMINATION Editor, J.G. Macleod: Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone. £4.25

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ISSN: 2051-7580 (Online) ISSN: 0482-3206 (Print)

Res Medica is published by the Royal Medical Society, 5/5 Bristo Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9AL

Res Medica, Autumn 1974: 15-16

doi:[10.2218/resmedica.v0i0.912](https://doi.org/10.2218/resmedica.v0i0.912)

CLINICAL RESEARCH FOR ALL

Cyril Maxwell

Cambridge Medical Publications Ltd. (1973)

Price £2.85p

This paperback, which is easily read in a few evenings, explains, in practical terms, the essentials of clinical research. No previous experience or special knowledge is assumed and the reader is guided through all the stages of a research project, from the generation of the original idea to the publication or reading of the completed paper.

Especially useful to the general reader is the section on "reading around", which describes how to obtain information from references using the various medical indexes. Such instructions are helpful in planning the most humble essay. Also valuable is the section on "reading a paper", the method outlined making perusal of the journals much more meaningful.

Despite a somewhat irritatingly condescending style, it is an excellent book, which succeeds in planting the seeds of enthusiasm and inspiration for future research work, and in promoting a more critical approach to the results of others.

Gillian Sheppard

A COMPANION TO MEDICAL STUDIES

Editors-in-Chief: R. Massmore and J. S. Robson

Vol. 3, parts 1 and 2

Oxford; Blackwell Scientific Publication

£11.50 each part (£8.00 paper-back)

There are two approaches to buying medical textbooks: either to purchase several small specialised books, or a few comprehensive tomes. Volume 3 of the Companion will appeal to the latter school. Too large to carry around, or read in bed with comfort, these volumes contain a clear, comprehensive and well-illustrated account of almost the whole of clinical medicine and many relevant subjects, such as clinical pharmacology, not customarily covered in standard works. The editors are to be congratulated on achieving such a degree of uniformity and readability. Their efforts at producing an integrated text have been largely successful, although the accounts of clinical

chemistry and paediatrics have become rather scattered.

All we now need is an integrated medical course in which to use these books.

J. Waite

CHEMOTAXIS AND INFLAMMATION

P.C. Wilkinson

Churchill Livingstone 1974. £4.00

This book describes itself as being of value to postgraduates and others working in the biological and medical sciences. This is undoubtedly so and any medical student will profit from browsing through individual chapters. The text makes easy reading and is well supplied with references to both reviews and important original contributions. A chapter on chemotaxis in several biological systems and the historical evolution of its study help place the whole topic in perspective.

Professor Wilkinson has written a book which fills the gap between the cursory treatment afforded chemotaxis in the textbooks on one hand and original research contributions on the other. It is recommended to those undertaking projects in this field.

Stuart Blackie

THOMSON'S CONCISE MEDICAL DICTIONARY

William A.R. Thomson, M.D.

Churchill Livingstone, 1973. £1.80

The aim of this dictionary is to provide the doctor, those who work with him, and medical students with a short dictionary containing definitions of most of the words they will meet in the course of their duties.

It succeeds admirably in its aim. The book is small: "large pocket size". The entries are very concise, with no pictures. The author concentrates on the meanings of the words only. No etymology is included, which is a pity because if the logic behind a term helps me to remember it.

There are two appendices: Arteries, Muscles, Nerves and Veins; and Weights and Measures (not biochemical values).

As a book which you can retire to a corner with and consult before being berated by your colleagues for your ignorance, or which will relieve the frustration of that awkward word in the textbook, this little dictionary comes into its own.

Simon Trotter

THE AUTHORS

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David Francis is a Houseman in the Royal Infirmary.

CLINICAL EXAMINATION

Editor, J.G. Macleod: Edinburgh:

Churchill Livingstone. £4.25

Clinical examination is not a subject which changes with the passing of time. The third edition of this work is justified by a vastly improved section on the psychiatric history and a selection of new illustrations.

The book is still helpful as part of an introduction to clinical studies, despite the doubling of the cost since the last edition. No-one would deny the importance of physical examination, but I cannot help wishing that greater emphasis had been laid on the importance of taking an adequate history.

J. Waite

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