

## BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKRESENSIES

### THE ACUTE PHASE OF POLIOMYELITIS

*Diagnosis and Treatment of the Acute Phase of Poliomyelitis and its Complications.* Edited by Albert G. Bower, M.D. Pp. 250 with 64 illustrations. 50s. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1954.

*Contents:* 1. A Modern Concept of the Treatment of Acute Poliomyelitis with Particular Reference to Cases with Respiratory Insufficiency. 2. Diagnosis and Differential Diagnosis of Poliomyelitis. 3. Medical Management of the Patient with Acute Poliomyelitis. General Considerations. 4. The Role of the Otolaryngologist in the Treatment of Poliomyelitis. 5. Pulmonary Complications of Acute Poliomyelitis with Respiratory Insufficiency from an X-ray Standpoint. 6. Observations on Prevention and Treatment of Pulmonary Complications of the Tracheotomized Respirator Patient. 7. The Detection and Care of the Patient

with Respiratory Difficulty. 8. Special Nursing Procedures for Respiratory Poliomyelitis Patients. 9. Physical Medicine in the Treatment of Acute Poliomyelitis. 10. The Role of the Obstetrician in the Treatment of Poliomyelitis. 11. Mechanical Apparatus. 12. Transfer of Respirator Patients to Other Locations. 13. Biochemistry and Electrolyte Changes in Poliomyelitis. 14. Orthopedic Treatment, Including Bracing. 15. Experiment and Experience of the Poliomyelitis Team of the Washoe County Medical Society, Reno, Nevada. Index.

This book, edited by Dr. Albert G. Bower, is written by 14 expert contributors, 11 of whom are members of a team attached to the Los Angeles County Hospital—the second largest hospital for communicable diseases in the USA. The clinical management and technique employed in the treatment of patients in the acute phase of poliomyelitis is described in detail and based on experience gained by the members of this team from the treatment of 17,000

cases at this hospital (11,000 have been treated during the past 7 years).

Whilst all the main clinical aspects are very adequately dealt with, it is felt that the chapters on the Medical Management of the Acute Poliomyelitis Patient, the Detection and Care of the Patient with Respiratory Difficulty, and the Biochemistry and Electrolyte Changes in Poliomyelitis, are particularly useful. Throughout the book the need for early tracheotomy in bulbar cases with respiratory embarrassment is emphasized if the mortality in 'wet' bulbar poliomyelitis is to be reduced. The book also includes valuable contributions by the otolaryngologist, radiologist, physical medicine expert, orthopaedic surgeon, and obstetrician. Various types of mechanical apparatus used on the patient requiring artificial respiration are described and their value assessed.

The book is well and concisely written and contains many excellent instructive illustrations. It is felt that it will be of general interest to all doctors, and particularly useful and informative to those who are called upon to treat patients with acute poliomyelitis in hospital.

D.M.K.

## MEDICAL STATISTICS

*Principles of Medical Statistics.* Sixth edition. By A. Bradford Hill, C.B.E., D.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.S. Pp. 314 + ix. 10s. 6d. London: The Lancet Ltd. 1955.

*Contents:* 1. The Aim of the Statistical Method. 2. Selection. 3. Presentation of Statistics. 4. The Average. 5. The Variability of Observations. 6. Calculation of the Standard Deviation. 7. Problems of Sampling: Averages. 8. Further Problems of Sampling: Proportions. 9. Further Problems of Sampling: Differences. 10. Further Problems of Sampling:  $X^2$ . 11. Further Examples and Discussions of  $X^2$ . 12. The Coefficient of Correlation. 13. Calculation of the Correlation Coefficient. 14. Life Tables and Survival after Treatment. 15. Common Fallacies and Difficulties. 16. Further Fallacies and Difficulties. 17. Calculation of Standardised Death-Rates. 18. Calculation of Standardised Indices. 19. Calculation of Standardised Indices. 20. Clinical Trials. 21. General Summary and Conclusions. Index.

In the 1st edition of this admirable book on medical statistics, the author discussed the problem of clinical trials in his chapter 'General Summary and Conclusions'. In this 6th edition, which appears 18 years later, he has devoted a new chapter to this subject, in which the topic is discussed in detail. It is of very great importance today since every doctor's post-box overflows with advertisements from drug houses claiming greater efficacy for their products.

Medical practitioners have a rather ostrich-like attitude to statistics, often because they don't understand the subject and are frightened by the magical mathematical symbols they see written in articles.

The brilliance of this book is that it can be read by the non-mathematically minded individual (such as the reviewer) and yet be enjoyed and understood. The writing is crystal clear and simple and the illustrations well chosen to interest a large reading public.

Most of the book is devoted to the techniques which the statistician employs in presenting and in interpreting figures. A great deal of discussion devolves round the meaning of 'significance' of difference between two sets of figures, and to the inferences that can be drawn from such differences.

Dr. Bradford Hill emphasizes time and again the care which investigators must take to ensure that the data they compare are in fact comparable. He also emphasizes the application of common sense and logic to the interpretations of the figures.

This slim volume is packed with wisdom presented in an eminently readable form and should be owned by every undergraduate and postgraduate student of medicine.

E.J.S.

## BONE AND BONES

*Bone and Bones. Fundamentals of Bone Biology.* Second edition. By Joseph P. Weinmann, M.D. and Harry Sicher, M.D., D.Sc. Pp. 508 with 302 illustrations. South African price £5 17s. St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company. 1955.

*Contents:* Part I. Normal Structure and Growth of Bone and Bones. 1. Bone Tissue. 2. Bones. Part II. Pathology of Bone and Bones. 3. Developmental Disturbances of the Skeleton. 4. Adaptational Deformities of the Skeleton. 5. The Influence of Endocrine Glands on Bone and Bones. 6. The Influence of Vitamins on Bone and Bones. 7. The Effect of Minerals on Bone and Bones. 8. Healing of Bones. 9. Necrosis of Bone and Inflammation of Bones. 10. Tumors of the Skeleton. 11. Idiopathic Lesions of the Skeleton. References.

This book with the odd title, ('bone is a tissue; bones are organs') is particularly memorable for large numbers of magnificent photomicrographs. Although none of them are in colour their detail and definition is such that the various structures, fibrils, cells and

so on stand out from each other in superb clarity. This applies to every photograph—there is not a single mediocre one.

In comparison the text is rather pedestrian. It is, where the reviewer is able to judge, good and accurate; in places, rather hard to follow. It certainly is not a book to read straight through. There does not seem to be anything new or particularly remarkable in it. There is disappointingly little on hyperthyroidism or on osteoporosis, but it is a pleasure to see terms correctly used. The conception of osteogenesis imperfecta as 'congenital osteoporosis' is a good one, and in accord with modern views.

The section on acromegaly is most outstanding. The mechanisms of the various deformities found in this condition are explained in detail.

There are few X-ray reproductions in this book—it is written by a pathologist and an anatomist in collaboration. It can, nevertheless, be heartily recommended to the radiologist; also to the pathologist, the orthopaedic surgeon and the physician interested in bone or bones.

P.J.

## MEDICAL GENETICS

*Counseling in Medical Genetics.* By Sheldon C. Reed. Pp. 268 + viii. \$4.00. Philadelphia & London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1955.

*Contents:* 1. 'In the Beginning'. 2. What are the Problems? 3. A Philosophy for Counseling. 4. A Few Laws. 5. Twins. 6. Don't Marry a Relative! 7. The Ubiquitous Heterozygote (or, The Common Carrier). 8. Mongolism. 9. Nervous System Malformations. 10. Clubfoot. 11. Harelip and Cleft Palate (of Mice and Men). 12. Congenital Heart Disease. 13. Mental Retardation. 14. String Beans and Chubbies. 15. Pyloric Stenosis. 16. Congenital Dislocation of the Hip. 17. Fibrocystic Disease of the Pancreas. 18. Blood Genetics. 19. Disputed Paternity. 20. Skin Color. 21. Convulsive Seizures. 22. Rheumatic Fever. 23. Tuberculosis. 24. Allergies. 25. Diabetes. 26. Schizophrenia. 27. Manic-Depressive Psychosis. 28. Genetic Effects of Radiations. 29. Putting the Puzzle Together. Appendix. Index.

Here at last is a really easy book on medical genetics. No one, absolutely no one, not even you, need be scared of it. It is to be feared that there is a considerable amount of ignorance even among our own ranks on this subject, together with misconceptions and misuse of terms like 'familial' and 'hereditary'. This book takes us from the beginning in a practical way, always with the main theme in mind. The main theme is the advice (or 'counseling') which we, as doctors, should give when consulted on a genetic problem.

I thoroughly recommend that it should be read by all of us. It could with profit be read by intelligent laymen. It appears to be highly accurate and up to date. The reviewer has found two things to quibble about; one on p. 103, the rather slighting reference to breast feeding and one on page 197, the too easy acceptance of foetal loss in a diabetic mother.

Works on medical genetics are usually written either by a doctor who knows little genetics or by a geneticist who knows even less medicine. The author here appears to understand both disciplines.

W.P.U.J.

## PRIMARY ANATOMY

*Primary Anatomy. Third Edition.* By H. A. Cates, M.B. and J. V. Basmajian, M.D. Pp. 339 + xii, with illustrations and plates. 46s. 6d. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1955.

*Contents:* 1. Introduction. 2. Skeletal System. 3. Articular System. 4. Muscular System. 5. Digestive System. 6. Respiratory System. 7. Urinary System. 8. Generative or Reproductive System. 9. Circulatory System. 10. Nervous System. 11. The Eye. 12. The Ear. 13. Skin and Endocrine Glands.

A knowledge of Anatomy is required by many students other than those studying medicine, and this text-book supplies their need. It is intended for nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and all those requiring an elementary knowledge of human anatomy. There are but few text-books which fill the need for these students. Nurses sometimes have to rely on books intended for school children or written for First-Aid or Home Nursing classes, which are obviously too superficial and simple. This book supplies all the necessary information needed by these non-medical students and is sufficiently comprehensive to satisfy the most seeking amongst them.

The choice of a systematic rather than a regional approach is greatly to be recommended. This produces clarity and continuity and introduces a good deal of physiology at the same time.

The book is generously illustrated and the drawings are of the bold, clear and schematic type where every picture tells a story.

P.J.M.R.