

Boekbesprekings : Book Reviews

LIVER CELL INJURY

Liver Regeneration in Man. By C. M. Leevy, M.D. Pp. xiv + 112. Illustrated. \$10.00. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1973.

This timely monograph, a compact, concise review, deals with the morphological, biochemical and physiological responses to liver cell injury. Methods used for the assessment of liver regeneration are outlined. Regarding therapy, the author stresses the elimination of factors that damage hepatocytes, the protection of uninjured hepatocytes and the stimulation of regeneration of hepatocytes. This is accomplished by the correction of deficient precursors and catalysts, together with the suppression of circulating antagonists and the stimulation of hepatic RNA synthesis. The book should appeal to physicians and surgeons who have a special interest in hepatology.

N.G.

THE HISTORY OF A MEDICAL APPRENTICE

The Life and Fortunes of John Pocock of Cape Town 1814-1876. Compiled from his journals and letters by M. G. Ashworth. Pp. xii + 165. Illustrated. Cape Town: College of Careers. 1974.

Private journals were seldom kept by our South African ancestors. For this there may have been many sound and acceptable reasons. Nevertheless this deficiency remains regrettable since knowledge of our social past is often inadequate and, indeed, is riddled with hiatuses, most of which, alas, are unlikely to be filled. The publication of an old journal or series of letters is therefore always a significant event and one welcomes this account of the life of a humble medical apprentice at the 19th-century Cape.

Since this record of the Cape social scene includes much that is relevant to the practice of medicine, it should appeal to medical colleagues who have a leaning towards our South African past.

E.M.S.

ARRHYTHMIAS

Extrasystoles and Allied Arrhythmias. 2nd ed. By D. Scherf, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.A.C.C. and A. Schott, M.D. (Heidelberg), F.R.C.P. (Edinburgh), F.A.C.C. Pp. xiv + 1041. Illustrated. £16.00. London: William Heinemann Medical Books. 1973.

The 20th anniversary in 1973 of the first appearance of Scherf and Schott's *Extrasystoles and Allied Arrhythmias* was the occasion of a second edition by the same authors. In an age of unpredictable international alignments this example of continued Anglo-American co-operation is a heartening phenomenon and the result is correspondingly impressive.

Drs Scherf and Schott have reviewed a vast field of literature in updating their book, as demonstrated by innumerable references throughout the volume. Their over-all approach is again evident in a historical review before embarking on a discussion on current views of the electrophysiological basis of impulse formation and conduction. The various types of extrasystoles are described, followed by a discussion of par-arrhythmias. Atrial flutter and fibrillation are comprehensively dealt with; the authors show bias against re-entry and circus pathways, though conceding that this may coexist with multi-centric impulse formation. For the clinician a chapter on extrasystoles, drugs and electrolytes will be of particular importance, also ensuing chapters dealing with clinical aspects of extrasystoles. Therapy was, in places, less impressively handled. Thus the reviewer was surprised to note that for the prevention of extrasystoles in patients with myocardial infarction, Scherf prefers digitalis next to lignocaine. An initial dose of 25 mg lignocaine intravenously to suppress ventricular extrasystoles seemed inadequate, and valuable time would be lost by giving a 100 watt-second shock to a patient with ventricular fibrillation. Inevitably, in a volume of this size, delay in publication prevents adequate consideration of current work such as bundle of His electrography.

This is an authoritative and encyclopaedic work which abounds in references up to 1970. It should be of interest to all cardiologists and physicians with an interest in cardiology.

A.S.