

REVIEWS OF BOOKS AND AUDIOVISUAL AIDS

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Common Facial Dermatoses, by Ronald Marks.
John Wright & Sons, Ltd., 1976.

This minitext book contains 130 pages, 10 chapters and 80 figures describing common disorders of the facial skin. Some not too common conditions are included for completeness. Most of the first half deals with rosacea and acne, conditions which have interested the author for many years, and towards whose understanding he has made many significant original contributions. These chapters naturally represent the choicest morsels for the reader. In this section a number of hallowed myths relating to rosacea such as its causal association with dietary indiscretion and/or overt gastrointestinal pathology are cogently laid to rest.

Single chapters are devoted to dermatitis of the face, lupus erythematosus and dermatomyositis, the face and sunlight, infections and tumors of the facial skin and a final chapter on miscellaneous, granulomatous and ulcerative conditions. This book is easy reading and is loaded with information in an easily accessible form. Although very little of it is new most is current, however, I found few references later than 1974-75. (This is the bane of all new medical books since by their very nature there is 6 to 12 months of built in obsolescence at the time of publication.) Some recent controversies such as the one challenging the role of free fatty acids in producing inflammation in acne are naturally not included.

One feature which many will find annoying but can be easily corrected in subsequent editions, is that all the figures are in the first part of the book. This is inconvenient for the reader who must constantly turn back to find the figure referenced in the text.

Most of the clinical photographs are very good and many are in color. The photomicrographs are clear and demonstrate the pathology well. Figure 8 contains 4 drawings which crisply depict the distribution of 4 facial rashes. This is a very effective teaching aid which unfortunately was not used more extensively.

This book should prove to be a valuable reference source for clinicians who will probably want to keep a copy handy at the office, and an excellent introductory text for medical students and residents interested in facial dermatoses. I look for-

ward to subsequent editions which with minor revisions should prove to be a classic dermatologic text.

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Fortschritte der praktischen Dermatologie und Venerologie (Vol. 8), O. Braun-Falco and S. Marghescu (eds.) Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, 1976. (469 pp; \$37.80)

The book contains the proceedings of the eighth postgraduate course in practical dermatology and venerology held at the Department of Dermatology, University of Munich, July 26-30, 1976.

The 54 contributions cover a broad spectrum of pertinent topics of dermatologic diagnosis and management including phlebology, andrology and anorectal diseases, but some subjects, e.g., connective tissue diseases are discussed only marginally. The book closes with an excellent update of current trends in dermatological research given by Braun-Falco focusing on its relevance for practical dermatology.

Since the volume contains contributions of a heterogenous group of authors the quality of the lectures varies to some degree; a number of contributions bear perhaps too strong an imprint of the personal opinion and preferences of the respective authors and this is also reflected by the selection of the references. In general, however, the quality of the volume is high. The book represents a well-edited digest primarily intended for those physicians who have little opportunity to keep abreast with the current literature.

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Melanomas—Basic Properties in Clinical Behaviour: Proceedings of the Ninth International Pigment Cell Conference, Houston, Texas, 1975, Part 1.

Pigment cell conferences have certainly come of age. From the contour of the early meetings in the United States, 30 years ago this recent meeting in Houston contains articles from many of the prominent artists in the International affairs of melanogenesis and melanoma. This volume is a

carefully selected set of papers trying to give order to the unknown according to known categories in melanoma research. This is the task of science. Some of the contributors do evidence compulsive systematising not necessarily performed for the purpose of reality but rather in order to deny certain aspects of it and thus caricature the problems of melanoma. But in general such a universal problem is not so in this volume. Chapters on biochemistry, genetics, cell culture, immunotherapy, diagnosis and experimental therapy combined with therapeutic (retrospective) results and epidemiology have been divorced from the second part of the volume which concerns unique properties of melanocytes. This is a value for those interested in other animal biochromes but at the same time keeps pigment cell biologists in a milieu of those who have been struggling with the question of melanogenesis and malignancy in melanocytes for some time.

Even so, tempting hints on the effects of substituted phenols on malignant melanocytes conjure ideas in therapeutic minds. Indeed Lerner and Nordlund (*Arch Dermatol* 113:421 [April] 1977) in an editorial have provocatively titled it "Should Vitiligo be Induced in Patients after Resection of Primary Melanoma?". The induction of hypopigmentation as shown in Bleehe's article is an immediate follow on from the *in vivo* mouse melanoma and the *in vitro* human cell culture to a suggestion of a study perspective in-depth of the patients treated with phenolic or catecholic depigmenting agents. Coleridge's line in the Ancient Mariner "Her skin was white as leprosy" may well be prophetic!

The use of RcG in immunotherapy is presented in several papers and no immediate conclusion can be made about immunotherapy with regard to this cancer. One exciting paper from Rorsman in Lund showed that 5-s-cysteinyl dopa is excreted in the urine in considerably higher doses in summer than in other seasons. The range was highest in summer, intermediate in autumn and spring and smallest in winter. The exception of this compound is of course highest in red-haired persons and may relate to ultraviolet damage. It would be fascinating to know whether these patients were of Celtic ancestry. Other papers emanating from various centers with the support of the U.S. Public Health Service report therapeutic attempts with OTIC, Methyl CCNU, and BCG. The results are early but somewhat encouraging.

In papers by the demographers, Lee stresses a current increase in incidence and mortality from malignant melanoma in developing societies. This in itself seems an added stimulus for the pigment cell biologists and the melanoma-oriented re-

searchers to continue to meet, discuss, debate, discourse and argue since melanogenesis has not so far been divorced from the malignant melanocyte.

It is indeed fitting that Dr. Vernon Riley should have received the Myron Gordon Award at this conference. His persistent biochemical thrusts on melanoma cells have inspired a whole new generation to an irritating research problem not so superficial as "Two lovely black eyes."

This volume can be recommended for "club-members" only but it is surprising to survey the quality and the quantity of such a list.

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Viral Diseases of the Skin, Mucous Membranes and Genitals: Clinical Features, Differential Diagnosis and Therapy, with Basic Principles of Virology (1st Edition), Theodor Nasmann, with the collaboration of Gertrud Schaes and Otto Schultka, translated by Peter J. Frosch. George Thieme Publishers, Stuttgart, 1974, distributed by W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1977. (217 pp, 280 illustrations; \$29.95, \$30.85 in Canada)

This brief volume, not intended for virologists or microbiologists, represents an English translation of a 1974 German text, with some additions from the recent literature by the translator. It is an attempt by a single author to summarize in a simple format a wealth of information related to viral diseases of the skin and mucous membranes.

The text is divided into two parts—basic principles and specific diseases. The first section emphasizes classification, definitions, viral life cycle, and host response, with brief sections relating to interferon, immunization, and prophylaxis therapy. The discussion on serology assumes a knowledge of basic principles. In the specific diseases section, greatest emphasis is given to the pox, herpes, and papova virus groups, with limited discussions of ortho- and paramyxovirus, togavirus, picornavirus, rhabdovirus, arbo- and adenovirus.

Although the text lacks detailed and current references—for the total amount of information covered only 51 references appear, most of which are in German and dated before 1970—it is readable and not encumbered by undefined technical language. Some therapies, by virtue of German practice, differ. For instance, great acclaim is given to inactivated herpes simplex virus vaccine for prevention of recurrent disease, but references are lacking. Phototherapy and neutral red are advised for herpes simplex disease of the genitals,