

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS : BOEKRESENSIES

### CALCIUM METABOLISM

*Calcium Metabolism.* By J. T. Irving, M.A., Ph.D., M.D., F.Odont.Soc.S.A. Pp. xi + 177. 11s. 6d. net. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. New York: John Wiley & Sons. Inc. 1957.

*Contents:* Preface. I. Introduction. II. Content and Availability of Calcium in Foods. III. Intestinal Absorption of Calcium. IV. Intestinal Absorption of Calcium (continued). Influence of Phytic Acid. V. Intestinal Absorption of Calcium (continued). The Action of Vitamin D. VI. Calcium Content of the Body and of Various Tissues. VII. Utilization and Retention of Calcium in the Body. VIII. The Dietary Requirement of Calcium. IX. The Calcium of the Blood. X. Bone Formation and the Influence of Various Factors upon this. XI. Bone—Chemistry and Physics. XII. Enzymes and Bone Formation. XIII. The Calcium Metabolism of the Teeth. XIV. The Excretion of Calcium. XV. Extra-skeletal Functions of Calcium. Summary. Index.

The subject matter of this book is based on a course of advanced lectures given by the author when Professor of Physiology at the University of Cape Town. A general review of calcium metabolism was long overdue and this monograph is a welcome addition to an excellent series on biochemical subjects by an acknowledged authority. The author points out in the preface that the clinical aspects of calcium metabolism have not been dealt with except when these illustrate physiological principles as in rickets and diseases of the parathyroid gland. The clinician will, nevertheless, find much of great value in a book primarily written for physiologists and biochemists.

Some new and important conclusions are arrived at. In man the only important single factor to affect calcium absorption in the intestine is vitamin D. It is doubtful if phytic acid, which experimentally depresses calcium absorption, plays such a role in practical dietetics. The author presents a very good case for the view that the previous calcium intake is, within wide limits, the most important controlling factor in determining the level of calcium intake for equilibrium, owing to the ability of the body to adapt to low dietary levels of calcium. It follows, therefore, that the calcium requirement is a function of previous dietary history. With regard to the action of the parathyroid gland in controlling the calcium level of the blood the balance of evidence supports the view that the gland acts on calcium mobilization and not on renal phosphate excretion. It now seems certain that Robison's alkaline phosphatase is concerned solely with matrix formation and not with calcification.

The subject matter is clearly presented and a full list of references is given at the end of each chapter. The author is to be congratulated on his comprehensive and essentially up-to-date review of the subject. The reviewer warmly recommends it to the attention of all who wish to acquire information on modern aspects of calcium metabolism.

J.H.

## SURGICAL PRINCIPLES

*Surgery Principles and Practice.* Edited by J. Garrott Allen, M.D., Henry N. Harkins, M.D., Ph.D., Carl A. Moyer, M.D., Jonathan E. Rhoads, M.D., D.Sc. With 26 contributors. Pp. xxii + 1495. Illustrations 621. £5 10s. net. London: Pitman Medical Publishing Co., Ltd. 1957.

*Contents:* 1. Surgical Philosophy. 2. Wound Healing. 3. Applied surgical Bacteriology. 4. Surgical Infections. 5. Fluid and Electrolytes. 6. Nutrition. 7. Shock. 8. Blood Transfusions and Allied Problems. 9. The Principles of Isotope Technics in Surgery. 10. Neoplastic Disease—General Considerations. 11. The Assessment of Operative Risks. 12. Anesthesia. 13. Operative Surgical Care. 14. Non-operative Surgical Care. 15. The Endocrine and Metabolic Basis of Surgical Care. 16. Burns. 17. Radiation Injury from Local or Total Body Exposure. 18. Fractures and Dislocations: General Considerations. 19. Fractures and Dislocations of the Upper Extremity. 20. Fractures and Dislocations of the Lower Extremity. 21. Fractures and Dislocations of the Spine, the Pelvis, the Sternum and the Ribs. 22. Principles of Hand Surgery. 23. Military Surgery. 24. Skin and Subcutaneous Tissues. 25. Breast. 26. Thyroid, Thymus and Parathyroids. 27. Pituitary and Adrenal Glands. 28. Esophagus. 29. Stomach and Duodenum. 30. Liver, Gall-bladder and Bile Passages. 31. Pancreas. 32. Spleen. 33. Mesentery, Splanchnic Circulation, Portal Hypertension and Mesenteric Thrombosis. 34. Appendicitis and the Acute Abdomen. 35. Peritoneum, Peritonitis and Intra-Abdominal Abscesses. 36. Anatomy, Physiology and Treatment of Intestinal Obstruction. 37. The Intestinal Tract (continued). 38. Anorectum. 39. Hernia. 40. Peripheral Vascular Surgery. 41. Cardiac Surgery. 42. Lung. 43. Pulmonary Tuberculosis. 44. Carcinoma of the Lung and Tumour of the Thorax. 45. Principles of General Plastic Surgery. 46. Pediatric Surgery. 47. Gynecology. 48. Urology. 49. Orthopedics (Nontraumatic). 50. Surgery of the Nervous System. Index.

In a surgical world where most books for undergraduates tend to be rather conventional and therefore redundant, it is refreshing to encounter a new text book of surgery designed by four men who are lucid advocates of the modern approach to surgery.

As active Professors in leading American medical schools, they recognise the existence of excellent text-books in which may be found details of individual disease processes. While these printed products of what a recent visitor referred to as the 'pre-milliequivalent age' remain invaluable, their experience as teachers has induced them to compile a book especially designed for the 'post milliequivalent student'. In doing so, they have chosen to plan the text mainly as a scaffolding on which the student may build using the material provided by the excellent bibliography.

The opening chapter, entitled 'Surgical Philosophy', reflects the stimulating spirit of the book. The fundamentals of surgery such as the problems of Shock, Infection and Inflammation are emphasized, but the unique quality of the text lies in the basic discussions of modern subjects such as isotopes, fluid balance, radiation hazards, military surgery, nutrition and the metabolic response to surgery. The more conventional chapters on General Surgery, Orthopaedics and Urology do little more than outline current American thought on these topics without providing detail. One hesitates to criticise this as an omission as the authors probably regard this as outside the scope of this work. In a pioneering venture of this kind, it is difficult to strike a balance and impossible to satisfy all.

This book, compiled primarily to stimulate the intelligent student to read further and to appreciate the vital role of the basic sciences in surgery today, deserves to be read widely. It has a distinctive informality, however, and will not appeal to those who aim to use it as a detailed reference book or for the purposes of passing any specific examination.

W.A.J.

## OFFICE CYTOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES

*Cytologic Technics for Office and Clinic.* By H. E. Nieburgs, M.D. Pp. viii + 233. 171 Figures. \$7.75. New York and London: Grune & Stratton, Inc. 1956.

*Contents:* Preface. Introduction. 1. Oral Cavity. 2. Laryngeal Smears. 3. Cytologic Diagnosis of Cancer of the Maxillary Sinuses. 4. Cytologic Diagnosis of Pulmonary Carcinoma. 5. Esophagus. 6. Stomach. 7. Duodenal Drainage. 8. Descending Colon and Rectum. 9. Vulva. 10. Cervix Uteri. 11. Prognosis of Cervical Tissue Response to Radiation. 12. Endometrium. 13. Carcinoma of the Fallopian Tube. 14. Ovarian Carcinoma. 15. Office Procedures for the Estimation of Hormonal Activity. 16. Breast. 17. Serous Effusions. 18. Urine. 19. Prostate. 20. Skin. 21. Histocytology and Operating Room Procedures. 22. Mailing of Specimens. 23. Organization and Function of Cytologic Laboratory. 24. Inter- and Intradepartmental Co-ordination. 25. Considerations on the Training of Cytotechnicians, Cytologists and Cytopathologists. 26. Laboratory Procedures. References. Appendix. Index.

This is an essentially practical book dealing primarily with the methods of collecting material from those body cavities and organs to which the technique of cytological examination can be applied. The list of contents indicates how wide a field is covered and de-

tailed instructions are given as to how specimens should be collected from these various sites.

The methods of preparing the specimens for examination and the staining techniques in use today are described in detail and there are chapters on the organization of a cytological laboratory, the mailing of specimens, and the training of cytological technicians.

Purely cytological aspects and the problems of cytological interpretation are not discussed at any length but the author does illustrate and mention in brief some of the cellular abnormalities encountered in neoplastic and other pathological processes in the different parts of the body.

This should certainly prove a useful book to the clinician who has to collect specimens for cytological diagnosis and to the technician who has to prepare these specimens for cytological examination. It makes no pretence to be a textbook of cytodagnosis.

M.S.

## HEALTH INSPECTOR'S HANDBOOK

*The Public Health Inspector's Handbook.* A Manual for Public Health Officers. Ninth Edition. (Completely Revised). By Henry H. Clay, F.R.S.H., F.I.P.H.E., assisted by Ronald Williams, O.B.E., D.P.A., F.R.S.H. Pp. xx + 614. 101 Illustrations. £2 0s. 0d. net. London: H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. 1957.

*Contents:* I. The Evolution of Public Health Law. II. Appointment, Designation, Duties, Training, and Qualification of Public Health Inspectors. III. Powers of Entry. IV. Nuisances. V. Smoke Abatement. VI. Offensive Trades. VII. Inspection of Premises. VIII. Housing—Procedure under the Housing Acts. IX. Housing—Premises Subject to Special Provisions. X. The Hygiene of Building. XI. Natural Lighting. XII. Water. XIII. Drainage. XIV. Sanitary Fittings and Apartments. XV. Plans. XVI. Conservancy and Sewage Disposal Camp Sanitation. XVII. Refuse Disposal and Public Cleansing. XVIII. Ventilation. XIX. Heating, Hot-water Supply, and Gas Services. XX. Factories, Workplaces, and Shops also Rag Flock, etc., Premises. XXI. Milk and Dairies. XXII. Food Control: Composition, Description, and Protection of Food. XXIII. Preservation of Food. XXIV. Slaughter-Houses and Knackers' Yards. XXV. Meat Inspection. XXVI. Fish Inspection. XXVII. Control of Infectious Diseases. XXVIII. Disinfection. XXIX. Canal Boats. XXX. Elementary Vital Statistics. XXXI. Office Organisation and Routine. XXXII. Useful Memoranda and Glossary of Building Terms. Index.

This publication, which has now reached its ninth edition, has, as the title indicates, been written primarily for the Health Officials of the United Kingdom, it incorporates the latest health legislation promulgated since 1954 when the eighth edition was printed.

The book is readable, well printed, contains many excellent illustrations and covers, in an admirable manner, a very wide field.

I am doubtful whether it will find a place on the bookshelves of local health officials on account of the difference between our health legislation and that of the United Kingdom. For a reference work, however, it should be found more than useful for those persons responsible for environmental sanitation and its allied problems.

E.D.C.

## JAMA CLINICAL ABSTRACTS

*J.A.M.A. Clinical Abstracts of Diagnosis and Treatment.* Pp. vi + 564. \$5.50. New York and London: Intercontinental Medical Book Corporation with Grune & Stratton, Inc. 1957.

*Contents:* Preface. Digestive System. Respiratory System. Cardiovascular System. Urinary System. Reproductive System: Pregnancy, Breast, Ovaries, Vagina and Uterus, Testes. Endocrine System. Bones, Muscles, Joints, Connective Tissue. Blood and Lymphatic System. Skin. Nervous System. Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat. Poisonings. Infections. Miscellaneous Diagnosis and Treatment: Diagnostic Technics, Radiation, Drugs and Drug Reactions, Hypothermia. Index of Subjects.

This book is a collection of abstracts covering the main branches of clinical medicine with the emphasis on diagnosis and treatment. These abstracts were originally published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in the "Medical Literature Abstracts" section. This collection has been made from more than 1,200 articles and they are here arranged systematically on an organ or disease basis to allow of easy reference. A year's selected reading is thus made available, crystallizing the recent advances or fashions in clinical medicine.

There is no doubt that this book serves a valuable purpose in facilitating the task of the specialist and general practitioner in keeping abreast of clinical medicine amidst the ever-increasing flow of publications. It is another digest. Is it a justifiable addition to those already available in the English language?

It is an excellent selection showing the wisdom of the author and his colleagues, who, with their judgement and skill in choice and summarising, have produced a balance between the ultra-conservative and the over-enthusiastic appraisal of new medical articles. Digests of clinical medicine inevitably contain abstracts of many papers in which the conclusions are based on poorly controlled studies. Much that is claimed will soon be disproved or disclaimed. Perusal of these condensations indicates many such investigations. This however, does not detract from the value of these annuals. Clinical medicine must of necessity advance in a somewhat un-

scientific way, as strict control of the trials and experimental situations is often impossible. The conclusions provide a stimulus and if the work is performed in institutions of repute and the writings selected by experienced teams, the reader may peruse them with confidence.

One can recommend this book to the advanced medical student, the post-graduate student, the graduate nurse, the general practitioner and the specialist. It should be a valuable annual addition to their bookshelves.

J.H.G.