

SURGERY

Basic Surgery. Edited by Leslie Oliver, M.B., B.S. (Lond.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.), F.A.C.S. Pp. xvi+1360. 680 illustrations, including 4 coloured plates. £6 6s. 0d. net. London: H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. 1958.

This book is a multiple-author text-book 'written primarily for undergraduate students by a team of writers with special experience of their subjects'. The contributors are J. G. Bonnin, D. L. B. Farley, G. Flavell, R. S. Murley, L. Oliver, B. H. Page, J. E. Piercy and V. A. J. Swain. It adequately covers general surgery and the recognized surgical specialities in one volume with 1327 pages. The paper and printing are of the best and there are numerous very good photographs and diagrams. The authors have succeeded in producing a book containing a brief factual account of surgery as it is practised today, but one is rather disappointed that so little attempt has been made to enunciate and discuss the principles of surgery, and therein lies the drawback of the book. But it provides a source of practical information for the student and as such deserves a place, with the many other similar ones available for use by the already bewildered undergraduate.

D.J. du P.

AFFECTIONS OF THE ISCHIUM

Injuries and Surgical Diseases of the Ischium. By Henry Milch, M.D. Pp. x+163. 106 figures. \$10.50. New York: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc. 1958.

The author states in his preface that he has written this book to focus attention on affections of the ischium which initially simulate lesions of the lumbar spine and hip-joint. He exceeds his self-imposed mandate and describes, *inter alia*, fractures of the ischium and decubitus ulcers. However, apropos of ischial fractures he emphasizes the difference between central dislocation of the hip-joint and ischio-acetabular fractures. Many of the latter fractures have been incorrectly termed central dislocations by other authors.

In discussing the treatment of decubitus ulcers he clearly indicates the importance of complete excision of the ischium, once the ulceration has extended through the bursal floor and has involved the underlying bone. Frequent recurrences in the past have undoubtedly been due to neglect of this concept.

It is a pity that the numerous radiographs in the book have reproduced so poorly. An outstanding exception is the radiograph of an ischial osteoid osteoma on p. 134, fig. 86. At the end of every chapter there is an extensive list of references. It is a useful little book for those who are interested in this particular subject.

M.S.

CLINICAL ENDOCRINOLOGY

Clinical Endocrinology. 2nd edition. By Karl E. Paschkis, M.D., Abraham E. Rakoff, M.D. and Abraham Cantarow, M.D. Pp. xii+941. 274 illustrations, 6 in full colour. \$18.00. New York: Paul B. Hoeber Inc. 1958.

A second edition within 4 years of publication testifies to the popularity of this fairly advanced text-book of general endo-

crinology. There is only one other book I know of which covers just the same field, and more and more people are likely to be buying one or other as the general importance of endocrine disturbances become daily more evident. New advances in thyroid pathology and therapy (e.g. tri-iodothyronine and goitrous cretinism—but not the work on aetiology of Hashimoto's struma)—and adrenal disorders (aldosteronism and the newer synthetic corticosteroids) are included in this edition.

The volume is nicely printed and generally useful, up to date and accurate. It suffers from one enormous drawback—a lack of consideration of work done or presented outside the USA. It is easy enough to find minor criticisms, some of which are largely conditioned by this major one. In this section on the gonads, it is assumed without discussion that LH and FSH are separate hormones in man, and no account is given of the work of the Birmingham school on their estimation. Likewise no mention is made of the Edinburgh work on the separate identification and estimation of the 3 major oestrogens in human urine. No real information is given of the properties or use of the newer synthetic progestins (e.g. enavid). Regarding gonadal dysgenesis, the old inaccurate statement is repeated that cubitus valgus is very common, while it would be nice to see proof that 'osteoporosis' really produced the bent legs shown by the patient on page 439.

Not a single mention is made of 'prediabetes' and it does not appear in the index. If a section on diabetes is included in a book like this, then it really should discuss modern conceptions of this type.

I think all general physicians should own this or a similar book, though they may still have to refer to the library for more up-to-date information quite frequently.

W.P.U.J.

DRUG TOXICITY

A Symposium on the Evaluation of Drug Toxicity. Edited by A. L. Walpole, Ph.D., B.Sc. and A. Spinks, M.A., Ph.D., B.Sc. Pp. xi+138. 58 illustrations. 25s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1958.

Many workers in various scientific disciplines are responsible for the rapid increase in the number of drugs presented to the clinician. One of their many problems is that the drugs should be as safe as possible in their therapeutic use. The toxic effects of drugs are predictable (overdose) but as far as the unpredictable reactions (allergy) are concerned much work needs to be done. It may have to be concluded that the latter hazards are part of the price we pay for therapeutic progress. The lines of investigation regarding drug toxicity are well discussed in this book. It is pointed out that controlled studies of allergic reactions have not been made in man; the production of drug allergies in animals may help to solve the problem, although so far the few published claims of experimental drug allergy in animals remain unconfirmed. Another line of investigation is the possibility of differences in metabolic pathways between allergic and non-allergic individuals. This volume will be of great value to all investigators of drug action in the laboratory and clinic and in industry.

N.S.

LEUKAEMIA

Leukemia. By William Dameshek, M.D. and Frederick Gunz, M.D., Ph.D. Pp. xi+420. 142 figures. \$15.75. New York and London: Grune & Stratton, Inc. 1958. Obtainable in South Africa through Westdene Products Ltd., P.O. Box 7710, 23 Essanby House, Jeppe Street, Johannesburg.

Leukaemia remains a very common disease and many thousands of articles have been written about it. The paucity of books on the subject is therefore truly amazing. For this reason alone this volume is bound to receive a warm welcome. It can be compared in its scope with Forkner's monograph, which for so many years has been the best single reference source. In this book the authors speak from their own wide experience of the disease, both of the literature and of clinical cases, and are thus able to make clear and authoritative statements.

The book follows conventional lines and most of the varieties of human leukaemia are fully discussed. The problems of the prevalence (is it increasing?) and the aetiology (is it a virus, or an 'enzyme deletion', or a malignant neoplasm, or what?) are squarely faced; so is the problem of treatment (could it ever be cured?).

Of special interest are the chapters on the myeloproliferative syndromes. Most haematologists would agree with the authors' concept of the chronic varieties but might still be reluctant to include what they call the acute myeloproliferative disorders in the same broad category. But all would agree that the authors argue their case fairly and with conviction. Messrs. Grune and Stratton, too, have produced the book with their customary skill, and all in all both the authors and the publishers can be proud of this volume. It is heartily recommended.

C.M.