

Infected Hands

The Care of Hand Infections. Joan Sneddon. (Pp. 88; £1.30) Edward Arnold. 1970.

Dr. Sneddon has said nothing new about infection of the hands, but she has produced what is so far the most easily portable book on a very important subject. Each chapter deals with one particular subject, which makes for repetition but adds to the book's value for reference.

One of the longest chapters deals with septic arthritis, which is a condition that most young doctors know very little about. Moreover, its infrequency ensures that they are unlikely to learn enough about it to be able to recognize it in the earliest and easily curable stage. There is rather more enthusiasm for the abortive effects of antibiotics given before suppuration has occurred than some might feel able to share, but the general

policy advocated is sound. Operative technique is described simply and clearly, but the poor resistance to infection by tendon, ligament, and other tough sorts of fibrous tissue deserves mention, because of the occasional need to be what may appear alarmingly radical in surgical clearance of a lesion. The book can be recommended as a handy and reliable source of information on the subject, and it should prove popular.

P. S. LONDON

Keeping up with Medicine

The Medical Annual 1970. A Year Book of Treatment with a Practitioners' Index. Ed. Sir Ronald Bodley Scott, K.C.V.O., F.R.C.P., and R. Milnes Walker, C.B.E., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 586; £3.15.) John Wright. 1970.

Though still called a "Year Book of Treatment" this annual deals with much more than therapy and contains many comprehensive accounts of a wide variety of conditions. The editors have wisely retained the expected form and begin as usual with four articles on topics of general interest—obesity, decompression illness, heart valve replacement, and hyperbaric oxygen. The

rest of the volume is mainly concerned with work done in the last few years.

It was hard to detect the omission of any currently discussed subject. Perhaps it is too early to look for information on prostaglandins. There is hardly any overlapping, but when a subject is mentioned in two places—for example, Australia antigen—a cross reference would help the reader. New if rare concepts mentioned are auto-erythrocyte sensitization, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome, ferruginous bodies (for asbestosis bodies), and the "pobble" operation. Many of the topics will interest most doctors, such as the new beta-sympathetic blocking agents; the "pill"

and strokes; the Holmes-Adie (pupillary) syndrome and its pathological basis; and the cup to disk ratio. In the section on general medicine C. W. H. Havard summarizes a 1968 symposium on immunological deficiency syndromes. Under mental diseases J. C. Gibbons discusses the psychiatric complications of surgery. There is a comprehensive review of cutaneous xanthomatosis (signed by Julia P. Ellis, though her name is not in the list of contributors).

The yearly arrival of this famous book is always eagerly awaited by all sorts of doctors and, being pleasingly written and easy to handle, this 88th issue is strongly recommended.

C. ALLAN BIRCH

Skin Disease

Dermatology: Concise Medical Textbook. 2nd edn. E. Lipman Cohen, M.B., and J. S. Pegum, F.R.C.P. (Pp. 210; £1.75.) Bailliere, Tindall & Cassell. 1970.

Dermatology is a rapidly developing subject, and so it is not surprising that after six years a second edition of this book has appeared. Dr. Pegum replaces Dr. MacKenna as part author. Such development has meant a complete revision of the

book and this is evident on every page. Furthermore, by drastic pruning the authors have reduced the number of pages from 278 to 210. This has been achieved by cutting out certain rare conditions and reducing other chapters to what is appropriate in a book of this type without any loss of clarity.

The changing approach to dermatology is well illustrated by the first chapter, which now deals with the biology and functioning of the skin instead of the classical anatomy.

The book has been simplified in many ways—for example, contact dermatitis replaces the term dermatitis venenata, and there are now eight pages of useful pictures which were lacking in the first edition. The one thing I regret is the lack of mention of tar paste in the treatment of chronic eczematous conditions and the reliance on local corticosteroids.

This second edition has been brought up to date completely, and well maintains the standard of its predecessor.

F. F. HELLIER

"Popular" Science

The Mind of Man. Nigel Calder. (Pp. 288; £2.25.) British Broadcasting Corporation. 1970.

It is easy to sneer at "popular" science, but all too often nowadays the practical alternative to it is not erudite, respectable learning but ignorance. Is this really to be preferred to that most despised of commodities, a

little learning, obtained from popular books such as this one on the mind of man? One hopes not. Based on material gathered for a television programme of the same name, it is eminently readable, generally accurate, and should be readily digested even by a brain half-addled after a hard day's practice. Nigel Calder, who also wrote the programme, boldly disregards "the specialist

prejudices that tend to prevent a broad view" to take his readers on an imaginative voyage of discovery.

The average doctor is unlikely to learn even a little about recent brain research unless he reads a book like this one, which relates the bare facts to real life, drawing—as the "blurb" accurately claims—"practical implications for human society which should be more widely known."

GEORGE BIRDWOOD

SHORTER NOTICES

This publication on viral hepatitis from the World Health Organization consists of 13 sections which review the present state of knowledge on Australia (hepatitis-associated) antigen. The booklet opens with an up-to-date general review, which is followed by sections on diagnostic techniques, each of which is contributed by experts with these procedures. Comprehen-

sive data, including precise details on the composition, preparation, and source of reagents, are included for such techniques as immunodiffusion, complement fixation, immunoelectrophoresis, immune electron microscopy, platelet aggregation, and fluorescent antibody. There are sections in this publication which deal with possible sources of antibody in man and in

other animals. Finally, brief details on the application of laboratory methods and future requirements are included. (*Viral Hepatitis and Tests for the Australia (Hepatitis-associated) Antigen and Antibody*. Reprint No. 2537 from the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 1970, 42, No. 6, 957. (Pp. 36; 30p) H.M.S.O., 1970.)

carried a clear message of the benefits to health which followed from giving up the pernicious habit. He was delighted that the Government had taken the first steps towards the promotion of public health in this field, and he hoped that many further steps would follow. He believed we were observing a slow change in social habits, and the change must be accelerated and encouraged. It was now rare to see cigarette smokers in gatherings of doctors. The message must be spread far afield. A further grant was being made to the Health Education Council, but 13 times as much was being spent on public education in road safety although each year lung cancer killed four times as many people as did road accidents. While the Health Education Council was spending £100,000, millions of pounds were spent on promotion, advertising, and coupon schemes. Doctors were setting a good example, but far too many still smoked cigarettes, and far too few seized the opportunity to talk to and persuade their patients. We must no longer tolerate the misery and ill health that resulted from chronic bronchitis, the toll of coronary diseases, and the preventable deaths from cancer of the lung. The time had come to act.

Children Who Smoke

Baroness WHITE spoke of the research being undertaken under Professor Holland by St. Thomas's Hospital. The investigators had come to the conclusion that by the time children reached the age of 16 some 30 to 40% of the boys and some 25% of the girls were already smoking. Something equally disturbing was that the investigations into the effect of propaganda on children of that age showed that it was virtually negligible. It made no impression at all. Apparently we had not yet found the way to understand the motivation of young children sufficiently. The fact that they might die at the age of 50 instead of 60 had no meaning whatsoever at that age.

The EARL OF ARRAN asked whether it was believed that the fact that a packet carried a small warning, a mild warning, would make the slightest difference. He suggested that all cigarette advertising in all the mass media, including commercial radio, should be statutorily forbidden, and he would statutorily forbid the placing of cigarette machines in any public place.

Pipe and Cigar Tobacco

Lord BROCK could not fully endorse the concentration on the dangers of cigarette smoking and the playing down of the dangers of pipe and cigar smoking. Those dangers were far less than those of cigarette smoking, but his own observations told him that the pipe smoker was not safe from the danger of contracting lung cancer. Although lung cancer was a terrible disease, with a short life expectancy, some sufferers might be cured by treatment in favourable circumstances. But only a small percentage of all cases were suitable for operation. The main mass of patients were not sent to a surgeon, because their disease was too advanced when it was diagnosed.

Lord ABERDARE said there were papers from Europe suggesting that the incidence of lung cancer was as great in pipe and cigar smokers as in cigarette smokers, but the experimental method used made their interpre-

tation doubtful and unreliable. American and Canadian studies, as well as the report of the Royal College of Physicians, showed that pipe and cigar tobacco was relatively less harmful. It was a matter of great satisfaction that the manufacturers had agreed to the publication of figures for tar and nicotine. The figures, it was intended, would be published in a sort of league table. On the subject of advertising and the banning of advertising, for the moment the Government was going ahead with voluntary agreement, and it felt that for the time being this was the best way of proceeding.

¹ *Smoking and Health Now*. A report of the Royal College of Physicians. London, Pitman Medical and Scientific Publishing Company. 50p.

² *British Medical Journal*, 1956, 2, 1071.

MEDICAL NEWS

Chair of Child Health at Southampton

Dr. I. C. S. Normand, consultant paediatrician to University College Hospital, London, since 1969, and honorary senior

lecturer in paediatrics at University College Hospital Medical School since 1967, has been appointed to the chair of child health at the University of Southampton. Dr Normand, who is 43, graduated from Oxford University in 1952. He is a member of a number of bodies concerned

with the study of child health, including the British Paediatric Association, the European Society for Paediatric Research, and the Neonatal Society.

Basic Medical Sciences

Doctors should appreciate that "basic" medical sciences are essential to the understanding of medicine at all levels and are not just the science learnt at the beginning of the undergraduate course. This point is stressed in the annual report of the Royal College of Surgeons' Institute of Basic Medical Sciences. The Institute's teaching programme includes regular courses in medical and dental sciences; but in addition intensive postgraduate courses have been organized for groups including obstetricians, pathologists, and general practitioners. The report suggests that in future most specialist training courses will emphasize study of the basic medical sciences.

R.C.S. Jacksonian Prize

The Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England invites the submission of dissertations for the 1971 award of the Jacksonian prize which consists of the sum of £52.50 and a bronze medal. The prize is open to Fellows and Members of the college, Fellows in dental surgery and Fellows in the Faculty of Anaesthetists. Intending candidates are advised to obtain the full regulations from the secretary of the college.

Montreal Celebration

The 150th anniversary of the foundation of Montreal General Hospital is to be celebrated by a reunion from 26 to 30 May. Scientific symposia in medicine and related subjects have been arranged and many former staff and students from the hospital and McGill University will be attending.

COMING EVENTS

Royal College of Physicians of London.—Clinical pharmacology session, "Renin, Angiotensin and Blood Pressure," 30 March, 2.30 p.m. For details see advertisement on page xxvi.

Canadian Medical Expedition to Easter Island.—Symposium on microbiology project, 26-28 April, Montreal. Details from Dr. G. L. Nogrady, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Montreal University, C.P. 6128, Montreal 101, P.Q., Canada.

1st Congress of the International Cerebral Palsy Society.—26-30 April, Arnhem. Details from the secretariat, c/o Holland Organising Centre, 16 Lange Voorhout, The Hague, Netherlands.

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

For attending lectures marked * a fee is charged or a ticket is required. Applications should be made first to the institution concerned.

Tuesday, 30 March

INSTITUTE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY.—At Hammersmith Hospital, 2 p.m., Mr. S. Seligman: Obstetric Shock; 3 p.m., Dr. Celia M. Oakley: Heart Disease in Pregnancy. (Admission by ticket only, obtainable from Secretary, Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Chelsea Hospital for Women, London S.W.1)*

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—5 p.m., Hunterian lecture by Professor C. G. B. Galasko: Skeletal Metastases and Mammary Carcinoma.

Wednesday, 31 March

INSTITUTE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY.—At Queen Charlotte's Hospital, 2 p.m., Mr. S. C. Simmons: Clinical Use of Blood Sampling and Continuous Monitoring. (Admission by ticket only, obtainable from Secretary, Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Chelsea Hospital for Women, London S.W.1)*

INSTITUTE OF UROLOGY.—5 p.m., Mr. J. F. Flannery: Retroperitoneal Fibrosis.

MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL.—At National Institute for Medical Research, London N.W.7, 4.30 p.m., Dr. G. Tomkins (California): Hormonal Control of Gene Action in Cultured Cells.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—4.30 p.m., Erasmus Wilson demonstration by Dr. J. F. Mowbray: Suppressed Lymphocyte Function in Cancer.

ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL.—5.15 p.m., Dr. R. J. K. Brown: Heart Failure in Neonatal Period.

Thursday, 1 April

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—10 a.m., Moynihan lecture by Professor Fritz Linder: Pathways to Surgical Diagnosis.

Friday, 2 April

INSTITUTE OF LARYNGOLOGY AND OTOLGY.—5.30 p.m., Mr. E. J. Radley Smith: Fractures of Base of Skull. **BEDFORD MEDICAL INSTITUTE.**—8.30 p.m., Bedford prize essay lecture by Dr. R. R. O'Moore: Place of Clinical Chemistry in Detection of Cancer.

Notice to Authors

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Correspondence on editorial business should be addressed to the Editor, *British Medical Journal*, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Telephone: 01-387 4499. Telegrams: *Aitiology, London, W.C.1*.

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