

classic of 1937 was principally concerned with the structure of the veins and their function as conducting tubes, this new book by Edwin Wood reviews their role as an important and active section of the ever-changing and self-adjusting cardiovascular system. It fills a long-standing gap.

The advance of our knowledge about the veins has been delayed by the deficiencies of the methods used to study them. Consequently, Wood uses almost half of the book to describe and justify his methods. Although the objections to the various pressure-volume techniques are not presented as fully as one would wish, the reader is left in no doubt as to the problems involved. Other methods are given little space; the useful "occluded-limb technique" is not mentioned at all. The experimental studies of venous physiology that are described are mostly those of the author and his colleagues. It is excellent work, but the book would be more balanced if the studies of other workers were described in more detail. The references at the end of each chapter are complete.

There is always a spate of new papers published the moment an author finishes his manuscript. It is doubly unfortunate that this should have happened to such a long-awaited book. One hopes that recent studies from the departments of Braunwald, Haddy, and Shepherd will appear in the second edition.

I recommend this book as a first-class introduction to the problems of venous physiology.

NORMAN L. BROWSE.

Antimicrobial Drugs

Biochemical Studies of Antimicrobial Drugs. Symposium, London, 1966. Edited by B. A. Newton and P. E. Reynolds. (Pp. 349+x; illustrated. 60s.) London: Cambridge University Press. 1966.

This book, which is mainly concerned with the mechanisms of action of antimicrobial drugs, gives the reader an interesting picture of advances made in this very active field since the Society for General Microbiology held a symposium on the strategy of chemotherapy eight years ago.

Many of the clinically useful antimicrobial drugs are antibiotics, which have been found by chance or in systematic but empirical screening programmes. In the first of 15 contributions to the symposium E. F. Gale formulates questions which need to be

answered if these substances are to provide information for further developments of chemotherapy, and surveys the results of investigations at the levels of biochemistry, cytology, molecular biology, and genetics. Other contributions deal with a variety of studies, mainly biochemical, on the mechanism of action of specific antibiotics, including penicillin, streptomycin, chloramphenicol, the tetracyclines, and griseofulvin. J. T. Park, who made the first crucial observations on the accumulation of nucleotides in penicillin-treated staphylococci, which resulted in the recognition that penicillin inhibited the synthesis of bacterial cell walls, describes some of the more recent results with cell-free systems, which are near to pin-pointing the precise reaction, involving cross-linking, with which the drug interferes. Subsequent articles are concerned with the effects of streptomycin, chloramphenicol, and the tetracyclines on protein synthesis and with the question why substances which disturb such a fundamental biological process should have a highly selective toxicity. The effects of antricycline on nucleic acid synthesis and the interaction of several antitumour antibiotics are also considered in some detail.

Most of the contributions to the symposium illustrate the great extent to which the recent growth in knowledge of the mode of action of antimicrobial drugs has depended on (and sometimes helped to stimulate) advances in our understanding of basic aspects of cell biochemistry. This interdependence is likely to increase as we come nearer to accounting for the selective action of such substances at the molecular level.

E. P. ABRAHAM.

British Red Cross

The British Red Cross in Action. By Beryl Oliver, G.B.E., R.R.C. (Pp. 579; illustrated. 63s.) London: Faber & Faber. 1966.

The publication of this volume will enlighten all who wish to know of the great work done by the British Red Cross Society. Within the compass of 579 closely printed pages it contains a detailed account of the beneficent work of almost a hundred years. Though Florence Nightingale, by her pioneer work in the Crimean War, showed the way to better treatment of the wounded, it was Henri Dunant who, by his graphic appeal in *A Memory of Solferino* and by his personal

influence, succeeded in founding the Red Cross organization. First the Geneva Committee was formed, then an International Conference was called, and finally a Diplomatic Representative Conference in 1864 led to the drawing up of the first Geneva Convention; this was signed by several nations who guaranteed protection to those who attended the wounded in wartime under the flag of the Red Cross.

Britain did not sign the Convention till 1865, nor was a British society founded until 1870, when at the outset of the Franco-Prussian War Colonel Loyd-Lindsay (later Lord Wantage) was instrumental in establishing "the National Society for aid to the sick and wounded in war." This was, in effect though not in official name, a Red Cross society, and carried out remarkably useful work in several wars during the next thirty years. Then some critics, among whom was a writer in the *British Medical Journal*, thought that the name of the Society should be changed, its scope widened, and its administration brought closer to that of the Services. With this intent, in 1898 the Central Joint Red Cross Committee was formed, but difficulties arose and were not solved until 1905, when King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra took the initiative and founded the British Red Cross Society upon a wider foundation, independent in time of peace, but under naval and military control in time of war.

The immense value of this step was proved in the first world war (1914-18), when the Red Cross work branched out in many new directions such as the auxiliary hospitals, voluntary aid detachments, the ambulance service, and many other ways. In the second world war (1939-45) the activities of the Society were still further extended and Red Cross Commissioners were sent to every important war area. Outstanding in that war was the part the Red Cross played in the blood-transfusion service. For details of all these manifold services readers must be referred to Dame Beryl's encyclopaedic volume in which the good work of over one thousand separate named persons are related.

This book will no doubt be widely read and will certainly remain as a book of reference. If, as is likely, a second edition is called for, it might be possible to prune a few of the minor details so as to make room for a few diagrams or sketch-maps that would help readers to follow the text more easily.

ZACHARY COPE.

Books Received

Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.

Clinical Examination of the Jugular Venous Pulse. By Arnold L. Colman, M.D. (Pp. 183+xiv; illustrated. \$10.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1966.

Principles of Group Treatment. By Eric Berne, M.D. (Pp. 379+xiii. 52s.) New York: Oxford University Press. 1966.

Parasitic Infections of Man and Animals. A Bibliography of Articles in Chinese Medical Periodicals, 1949-64. Compiled by Kan Lai-Bing, B.Sc.(H.K.), M.A., M.L.S.(Calif.). (Pp. 119+xiii. 22s. 6d.) London: Oxford University Press. 1966.

Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Cardiovascular and Respiratory Effects of Hypoxia. Edited by J. D. Hatcher and D. B. Jennings. (Pp. 406+vi; illustrated. sFr. 96.) Basle and New York: S. Karger. 1966.

Progress in Clinical Psychology. Edited by Lawrence Edwin Abt, Ph.D., and Bernard F. Riess, Ph.D. (Pp. 309+ix. \$11.75.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1966.

Clinical Uses of Whole-Body Counting. Proceedings of a Panel, Vienna, 1965. (Pp. 291; illustrated. £1 16s.) Vienna: International Atomic Energy Agency. 1966.

Advances in Enzyme Regulation. Vol. 4. Symposium, Indiana, 1965. Edited by George Weber. (Pp. 381+xiv; illustrated. £5 5s.) Oxford: Pergamon. 1966.

Problems and Progress in Medical Care. Essays on Current Research, 2nd Series. Edited by Gordon McLachlan. (Pp. 340. 25s.) London: Oxford University Press. 1966.

Psychiatry in the Practice of Medicine. By Allen J. Enelow, M.D., and Murray Wexler, Ph.D. (Pp. 355+viii. 52s.) London: Oxford University Press. 1966.

The Cell. Its Organelles and Inclusions. An Atlas of Fine Structure. By Don W. Fawcett, M.D. (Pp. 448+viii; illustrated. £3 17s.) London: W. B. Saunders. 1966.

The Juvenile Homosexual Experience. And its Effect on Adult Sexuality. By Robert H. V. Ollendorff, M.A., M.D., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., D.P.M. (Pp. 245. 50s.) London: Julian Press. 1966.