

Pregnancy Changes

Endocrinology of Pregnancy. Ed. Fitz Fuchs, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., and Arnold Klopfer, M.D., F.R.C.O.G. (Pp. 359; £7.) Harper and Row. 1971.

In the autumn of 1960 and again two years later two successful postgraduate courses on the endocrinology of pregnancy were held in New York and in San Juan. Stimulated by the two editors the contributors were encouraged to prepare their material for publication and this book is the result. In order to cover the field more completely the

editors have included a few additional contributors.

The result is a comprehensive and authoritative review of the subject, but it would be quite wrong to think of this as a series of disjointed essays covering selected aspects of the endocrinology of pregnancy. The editors have done their job well, and the contributors have managed most effectively to redraft their papers so that the whole presentation assumes a welcome cohesion and reads well. The underlying theme is the essential wholeness or unity of the feto-placental unit where-

by the fetal endocrine glands, the placenta, and the maternal production of certain steroid hormones are seen as one complex, interrelated system.

Here in one volume is an excellent account of the various aspects of the endocrinology of pregnancy. Each chapter has its extensive list of key references from the world literature and there are numerous graphs and tables to illustrate the text. It constitutes an essential addition to every departmental and University library.

J. K. RUSSELL

Time-zone Transitions

Human Circadian Rhythms. R. T. W. L. Conroy, L.R.C.P.I., and J. N. Mills, M.D. (Pp. 236; £3.) J. & A. Churchill. 1970.

This small book reviews the circadian activity patterns in normal human subjects together with brief summaries of the alterations in these rhythms which have been induced under experimental conditions and which have led to a more complete understanding

of the mechanisms involved. Circadian rhythms in body temperature, renal, and cardiorespiratory functions, and behavioural and perceptive activities are considered in detail, but the section on the endocrine rhythms is less satisfactory. The development of these rhythms in the neonate is also reviewed.

Important applied aspects are considered, in particular the influence of alterations in

the circadian rhythms induced by shift-working and time-zone transition on the efficiency of work, decision making, and health. Unfortunately for the clinician the section dealing with the circadian rhythm abnormalities found in the disease too synoptic and is occasionally inaccurate. There is a very extensive and useful reference list.

G. M. BESSER

Specially for the Membership

A Primer of Medicine. M. H. Pappworth, M.D. (Pp. 373; £3.50.) Butterworths. 1971.

In the third edition of this familiar volume there have been many changes, most of which add to its value. Much of the book has been rewritten and there are seven new chapters. The basic structure, however, remains unaltered and the author's inimitable style is unmistakable.

The new chapters on ethical precepts and the art and science of diagnosis are entertaining, being interspersed with anecdotes and historical quotations, which despite their antiquity are as pertinent to the student of today as to those of previous generations. Footnotes briefly inform the reader of the nationality and period of writing of eminent physicians. In a textbook intended primarily for undergraduates the author has presented his dogmatic views on medical ethics and one fears that the student may regard the staff of academic units as catheter-crazed egotists whose interest in the patient is incidental to their esoteric practices. While undoubtedly there is some truth in "the sorry dehumanization of clinical medicine" it is also true that the author portrays only one aspect of the scene and never alludes to valuable research work, conducted ethically, nor of its propinquity to progress. Useful advice is, however, given to both teacher and student and justifiable caution is exercised in reliance on investigations, theories, specialization,

and the use of technical and obtuse terms to describe simple phenomena. Medical statistics "are like bikinis, concealing what is vital, whilst revealing much that is occasionally interesting."

The emphasis throughout is on bedside clinical medicine, and the student is encouraged to use all the faculties with which he is endowed to assimilate the maximum of information and then logically to deduce the diagnosis. Most teachers and physicians would agree with the author's depreciation of the increasingly popular practice of history taking from standard printed sheets. All who know Pappworth as a teacher will welcome the new chapters on general appearance, the head and facies, and the neck and hands, which contain a wealth of clinical information. But in an attempt to avoid repetition and the inevitable expansion of the book, he is over-zealous. For example, whereas the mitral facies and the facies of scleroderma and dystrophia myotonica are described in different sections, it would be of benefit to mention these briefly in the chapter on facies even at the cost of repetition.

The chapter on ophthalmology will be welcomed by all membership candidates. No longer will it be necessary to read ophthalmological volumes in search of basic facts, all too often regarded as elementary by the ophthalmologist. An excellent section on ophthalmoscopy is included in the chapter on the nervous system but would be more

appropriate in the chapter on ophthalmology.

There are occasional omissions. For example, pulmonary infarction is not included as a cause of haemoptysis, and questionable advice is given in the section on hypertension, the student being advised not to attempt to record the diastolic blood pressure if there is gross cardiac irregularity, especially when due to fibrillation. Whereas a distaste for eponyms is understandable, it is essential for the student to be aware of the important ones and it is regrettable that conditions such as Conn's syndrome, Peutz-Jeghers syndrome, Wilson's disease, and Kayser-Fleischer rings, although described, are not referred to by their well known eponyms. Similarly, although Rinné's and Weber's tests for deafness are described they are not mentioned by name and differentiation is difficult for the student.

This book has matured considerably since birth and if development is always accompanied by improvement, we may look forward to further maturation. It makes compulsory reading for the undergraduate and postgraduate student facing clinical examinations, but it will also provide pleasant and rewarding reading for practitioners in every field of medicine, and one suspects that many an examiner will brush up a few clinical signs prior to meeting the examinee.

E. T. O'BRIEN

SHORTER NOTICES

There is much more to "spare part surgery" than recent publicity about spectacular *tours de force* would suggest. Mr. Kenneth Cowan's monograph traces the history and use of many "spare" or "foreign" parts so frequently applied in modern surgery that their alien origin is

almost forgotten. Nails and screws for internal fixation of fractures, various materials for hernia repair, metallic and plastic plates to close skull defects, and blood itself are a few of the materials which the body accepts and we all but take for granted in every day use. Historical accounts of these and many other prostheses are included, together with the problems which

beset them. Organ transplantation is not omitted.

A short chapter is given over to rejection phenomena, with a summary of our present knowledge of immunological processes, and the book ends with some consideration of the ethical and economic problems of organ transplantation. (*Implant and Transplant Surgery.* Kenneth Cowan. (Pp. 55; £1.75.) John Murray. 1971.)

recently announced provisional timetable the Registrar of Trade Unions will start work in October and at that time all unions at present registered as friendly societies will be put on the new provisional register. Organizations, like the B.M.A. and the R.C.N., wanting to be placed on the special register will then be free to apply.

The Commission on Industrial Relations at present has the status of a royal commission. In November this year under the Act it will become a statutory body. In December with the setting up of the National Industrial Relations Commission some of the major provisions of the legislation will also come into operation. These will include agency and closed shops, sole bargaining agencies, and legally binding agreements. The Government intends to submit to Parliament the amended code of industrial relations practice before the end of the year, and early in 1972 the powers of the industrial tribunals—second tier industrial courts—will be extended. At that time the remaining provisions of the Act will come into force affecting such things as union membership and the right of registered unions to strike.

Loans for General Practitioners

Another 240 loans were advanced to N.H.S. general practitioners by the General Practice Finance Corporation in the financial year ending 31 March 1971. This brings the total of loans to 1,211 and the sum lent to over £6 million. The number of loans fell compared with previous years—possibly because of greater availability of finance from other sources, says the corporation's *Annual Report*, published last month, price 12½p.

Drugs through the Ages

An exhibition of books on the use and misuse of drugs from the 15th century is being held at the Royal College of Physicians in the Harveian Library until the end of December. The selection of books and documents goes back to the Papyrus Ebers of 1550 B.C. (bought in Thebes in 1873). From this first exhibit the visitor is left in no doubt that the ancients recognized both the euphoric and therapeutic effects of opium and cannabis. But there is no warning that stimulants and narcotics are harmful to health until 1694, when the apothecary to Louis XIV of France, Pierre Pomet, warns that "it (opium) is a dangerous remedy and should be used only with caution and the advice of skilful doctors." This apparently deterred no one except Pomet. The final section is a depressing one. There seems no end to the variety of hallucinogenic drugs now available. Newspaper cuttings are shown illustrating the efforts being made to eradicate the drug menace. The exhibition is open Mondays to Fridays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Migraine Trust Prize

A first prize of £150 and a second prize of £50 has been presented by the Migraine Trust for an essay competition on the subject, "Migraine in General Practice." Closing date 31 January 1972. Details from Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU.

Chief Dental Officer

Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Social Services, has appointed Mr. George Dutton Gibb to be Chief Dental Officer in the Department of Health and Social Security from 1 December 1971 succeeding Surgeon Rear-Admiral William Holgate. Mr. Gibb, who is 51, interrupted his dental studies in 1940 to join the Royal Navy and was commissioned in the executive branch. He qualified at Guy's Hospital in 1950 and has practised in High Wycombe since then. Mr. Gibb is a member of the Central Health Services Council and of the Standing Dental Advisory Committee, and since 1967 he has been Chairman of the Council of the British Dental Association.

People in the News

Dr. Reginald Lightwood, consulting physician to the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, and consulting paediatrician to St. Mary's Hospital, London, is now on an assignment as paediatrician to the International Grenfell Association, based at St. Anthony in Northern Newfoundland, studying child nutrition in the Labrador region.

Dr. Richard J. Bodman, of Waterford, Eire, formerly consultant anaesthetist to St. Paul's Hospital, London, and at present adviser to the Red Lion and Sun Society of Iran, Tehran, has been appointed to the chair of anaesthesia at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, from November 1971.

Dr. N. B. Kreitman has been appointed director of the Medical Research Council Unit for Epidemiological Studies in Psychiatry in the University Department of Psychiatry, Royal Edinburgh Hospital. Dr. Kreitman, who qualified from Westminster Hospital in 1949, is 44. He has been with the unit since 1966 and has been assistant director since 1968.

Mr. J. S. P. Lumley, of St. Bartholomew's Hospital has been awarded the first Hamilton Bailey prize of the British Section of the International College of Surgeons (1 May, p. 289). Mr. Lumley will visit the University Hospital of Chicago to study audio-visual aids in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, and the Cleveland Clinic to study aortocoronary venous bypass surgery.

COMING EVENTS

4th International Congress of Electromyography.—12-15 September, Brussels, sponsored by the International Federation of E.E.G. and Clinical Neurophysiology. Details from Dr. K. Hainaut, Brain Research Unit, 115 Boulevard de Waterloo, Brussels 1000, Belgium.

Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency.—Summer school, "Recent Developments in Treating Offenders," 13-18 September, York University. Details from the general secretary, I.S.T.D., 8 Bourdon Street, London W.1. (Tel. 01-629 0622.)

"Plastics in Medicine and Surgery."—Symposium, 15-16 September, Newcastle upon Tyne University, organized by the medical school and the north-eastern section of the Plastics Institute. Fee £10. Details and registration forms from Mr. A. J. Harrow, Regional

Postgraduate Institute for Medicine and Dentistry, Medical School, the University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU. (Tel. Newcastle 28511, extn. 30339.)

British Computer Society.—Residential conference on computers in medicine, "Spectrum 71," 15-17 September, Bristol University. Registration forms and details are obtainable from the conference department, British Computer Society, 29 Portland Place, London W1N 4AP. (Tel. 01-637 0471.)

Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.—Symposium on "medical subjects," 17-18 September. Visiting Fellows of the American College of Physicians will attend. Details from the registrar, R.C.P.I., 6 Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

Obstetric Anaesthetists Association.—Meeting, 17 September, 11 a.m., University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff. Details from Dr. M. Rosen, department of anaesthetics, Cardiff Royal Infirmary, Cardiff CF2 1SZ.

British Institute of Radiology.—Radiodiagnostic and radiotherapy meeting, 18 September, Southampton University. Application forms and details from the institute, 32 Welbeck Street, London W1M 7PG. (Tel. 01-935 6237.)

Norfolk and Norwich Hospital Bicentenary.—22-25 September. Former members of the medical staff who wish to attend should write to Dr. P. H. Beattie, Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich NOR 53A.

CORRECTIONS

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

In the list of newly elected Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (7 August, p. 384) the nineteenth name should have appeared as E. V. C. Dawson (*not* E. V. Coutts). We regret the error.

Dr. E. B. Alabaster

We regret that in the obituary of Dr. E. B. Alabaster (7 August, p. 376) it was incorrectly stated that Dr. Alabaster died at the age of 83. This should have read at the age of 78.

Diabetes and the Pill

In our report on the Annual Scientific Meeting symposium on "Oral Contraception, Risks and Benefits" (7 August p. 363) we quoted Dr. E. V. Kucnssberg as saying that the Royal College of General Practitioners prospective study "had been planned to observe 8,000 women years." What he said was, "If we were to find a sufficiently significant incidence of the pill affecting say—diabetic women—we would need to observe at least 8,000 women years." The R.C.G.B. study will include a much higher total of women years.

Corneoscleral Suture

In the letter by Dr. Catherine Maddox (24 July, p. 250) the second word in the first line was incorrectly printed. It should have read "A pre-placed corneoscleral suture . . ."

Notice to Authors

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