

## Work in Wiener's Department

**Advances in Blood Grouping.** Vol. 3. A. S. Wiener, M.D., F.A.C.P. (Pp. 658; \$19.75.) Grune & Stratton. 1970.

Each of the 72 chapters in this volume is a reprint of an article already published in a journal. There are scientific papers, semi-popular articles, and even letters to the editor, mostly written by Wiener himself

sometimes in collaboration with others, and there are a few not by him. These publications were printed originally between 1965 and 1969 and in fact represent a record of the work carried out in Wiener's department in those years.

The old controversy about blood group nomenclature still gets a lot of space. Quite a lot of the other material has now in-

evitably been overtaken by further "advances", but there is some interesting information on animal blood groups which is not familiar. Presumably this volume is intended for presentation, since most workers in this field will be readers of the original journals and few of the papers are designed for constant reference.

M. C. G. ISRAELS

## Respiratory Measurements in Children

**Pulmonary Function Testing in Children.** George Polgar, M.D., and Varuni Promadhat, M.D. (Pp. 273; £9.15.) W. B. Saunders. 1971.

This book fulfils a real need since this topic has not been previously covered. In spite of denying in their introduction that they did not intend to write a textbook of pulmonary physiology or a mere manual, to some extent the authors have done both. The section on "General Techniques" reiterates what is contained in many other publications, and some of the apparatus illustrated is the standard variety suitable for testing adults. In their section on "Specific Tests and Procedures in Children," however, they raise many important points relevant to pulmonary function testing in children. These range from minor ones, such as selecting a noseclip suitable for a child's nose, to details of the procedure for determining the work of breathing. Blood gas measurements in infants and children are described. It is perhaps surprising that there is not more

discussion about the use of "arterialized" capillary blood. A number of studies have been made comparing the values obtained from this type of blood to those found in actual arterial blood, and the implications of these might have been discussed more fully.

Chapter 4 deals with "Standard Values" and is perhaps the most useful in the book. There is a good discussion on the difficulty of obtaining and interpreting so-called "standard" or "normal" values in children. A wealth of data are then presented, derived from studies by a large number of authors. Though the standard values vary from one author to another, it is surprising how closely they, in fact, agree for the simpler parameters such as vital capacity, and this is well illustrated in graphic form. With the more complex indices of lung function there is more variation among different groups of workers. Also with these more sophisticated tests the methods used by different groups tend not to be strictly comparable. The data are set out well, however,

and the bibliography is full. It is a pity publication occurred before the very full recent data on many parameters in children obtained by Dr. Simon Godfrey at the Brompton Hospital could be included. The sixth chapter considers pulmonary function in disease, and is particularly interesting to asthma and cystic fibrosis. There is also an appendix with further details of the interpretation of the records obtained, followed by a useful alphabetical list of references.

Overall, this volume presents excellent data on normal values in children and details of pulmonary function testing in them. It is well illustrated and the photographs and tables clear. The inclusion of quite so much material relevant to pulmonary function in general in the chapter on "General Techniques" perhaps lengthens it rather too much. Nevertheless, it will prove a useful guide to many clinically and physiologically minded paediatric workers.

D. T. D. HUGHES

## The Experiencing Self

**Facing Reality.** Philosophical Adventures of a Brain Scientist. John C. Eccles. (Pp 210; £3.50.) Longman. 1971.

This book is an account of the views of a brain scientist of world renown on the life-long interplay between the conscious self and the external world. It is based on various lectures and papers written over the last few years, including some unpublished material.

It begins with an account of the neuronal machinery of the brain and the synaptic mechanisms possibly concerned in learning

and memory. It proceeds through the study of the conscious self to such subjects as the evolution of self-consciousness, the understanding of nature and of scientific investigation, free will, creativity and the necessity of freedom for it, the brain, the soul, and education for the future. Sir John Eccles believes that the emergence of life as we know it and the development of self-consciousness are unique events which are unlikely to have been duplicated elsewhere in the universe. He is continuously impressed by what he calls "the experiencing self" and strongly disagrees with behaviour-

istic or mechanistic concepts of the life of man.

The reality of which he speaks in the title of his book is above all the reality of self awareness and death awareness. These two are at the heart of many present discontents, and as a brain scientist Sir John Eccles is distressed that the problems should so often nowadays be treated with irrationality and not with reason. Sir John has often broken a lance with the philosophers and has read widely. This is a deeply interesting book.

L. J. WITTS

## SELECTED NEW TITLES

**Clinical Urography.** 3rd edn. J. L. Emmett, M.D., M.S., and David M. Witten, M.D., M.S. (3 volumes Pp. 2101; £35.70.) W. B. Saunders. 1971.

**Memorandum on Leprosy Control.** S. G. Browne, O.B.E., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., D.T.M. (Pp. 27; free to senior medical and paramedical personnel from Editorial Department, The Leprosy Mission, 50 Portland Place, London W1N 3DG.) 1971.

**Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases Bath: Reports.** Vol. 15. 1969-1971. A Collection of Papers recently published by Members of the Staff of the Hospital and Report.

**Principles of Medical Statistics.** Sir Austin Bradford Hill, C.B.E., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. 9th edn. (Pp. 390; £1.25.) The Lancet. 1971.

**Pharmacology and Toxicology of Naturally Occurring Toxins.** Vol. 1. H. Raskova. (Pp. 368; £7.50.) Pergamon Press. 1971.

**Principles of the Use of Radio-isotope Tracers in Clinical and Research Investigations.** R. Oliver, M.I.Biol. (Pp. 100; £1.50.) Pergamon Press. 1971.

**Clinical Guide to Undesirable Drug Interactions and Interferences.** Solomon Garb, M.D. (Pp. 491; \$12.50.) Springer Publishing Co. 1971.

**Essentials of Neurology.** 3rd Edn. John N. Walton, T.D., F.R.C.P. (Pp. 482; £3.50.) Pitman Medical & Scientific Publishing Co. 1971.

**The Alcoholic—and the Help He Needs.** Part II. Max Glatt, D.P.M. (Pp. 105; 50p.) Priory Press. 1971.

**Physiology for Practitioners.** Ed. Ian C. Roddie, F.R.C.P.I. (Pp. 202; £1.50.) E. & S. Livingstone. 1971.

**Reports on Rheumatic Diseases.** Ed. Clifford Hawkins and H. L. F. Currey. (Pp. 157; 50p.) The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council for Research. 1971.

**Exercise and the Coronary Patient.** E. R. Nye F.R.A.C.P. and Gay Wood, N.Z.T.P. (Pp. 93; £1.) Wolfe Publishing. 1971.

**The Empty Hours.** A Study of the Week-end Life of Handicapped Children in Institutions. Maureen Oswin. (Pp. 216; £2.50.) Allen Lane, The Penguin Press. 1971.

## People in the News

Dr. C. O. Carter, director of the M.R.C. Clinical Genetics Unit at the Institute of Child Health, London, is to visit Malta on 17-23 October. He will have discussions with the minister of health and the chief government medical officer and he will lecture to general practitioners and medical students on "Genetic Counselling."

## COMING EVENTS

**Blackpool and Fylde Postgraduate Medical Centre.**—Copies of the programme of meetings and refresher courses for general practitioners, September-December, are obtainable from the postgraduate secretary, Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR. (Tel. Blackpool 34111, extn. 391.)

**Middlesex Hospital Medical School.**—(1) Annual dinner, 1 October, 7 for 7.30 p.m., Savoy Hotel. Professor C. A. Keele will preside. (2) Annual refresher course for general practitioners, 1-3 October. Details are obtainable from the secretary of the school, London W1P 7PN. (Tel. 01-636 8333, extn. 7355.)

**Sheffield Regional Psychiatric Association.**—All-day meeting, 2 October, St. John's Hospital, Lincoln. Details from Dr. J. Harding Price at the hospital. (Tel. Lincoln 27401.)

**British Academy of Forensic Sciences.**—Annual scientific meeting, "Pollution," 2-3 October, Zoological Society of London. Admission by card and applications should be made to the secretary-general of the academy, Forensic Medicine Department, London Hospital Medical College, Turner Street, London E1 2AD. (Tel. 01-638 0368.)

**19th International Congress of Aviation and Space Medicine.**—Under the auspices of the International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine and the Israel Society of Aerospace

Medicine, 24-29 October, Tel Aviv. Details from Dr. I. Glazer, El Al Israel Airlines, Lod Airport, Israel.

**7th Biannual Congress of the Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania.**—13-15 October, Seoul, Korea. There is no registration fee. Details and forms from C.M.A.A.O. organizing committee, c/o Korean Medical Association, I.P.O. Box 2062, Seoul, Korea.

**Chelsea Hospital for Women Centenary Celebrations.**—Scientific meeting followed by dinner, 15 October. Former members of the medical staff are invited and those wishing to attend should contact Mr. G. Chamberlain at the hospital, Dorehouse Street, London S.W.3. (Tel. 01-352 6446.)

**Clinical Demonstration Cancelled.**—The demonstration due to be held at the Institute of Diseases of the Chest, London S.W.3, on 15 October, 5 p.m., has been cancelled.

**International Conference on Rheumatic Diseases.**—25-27 October, Rome. Details are obtainable from the organizers, Accademia Romana di Scienze Mediche e Biologiche, Palazzo Pignatelli, Via IV Novembre 162, 00187 Rome, Italy, and from Miss M. Barzetti, Italian Institute, 39 Belgrave Square, London S.W.1 (tel. 01-235 1461.)

**1st Caribbean Medical Conference.**—14-20 November, Kingston, Jamaica, sponsored by the M.A.J. and C.M.C. Registration fee J\$42. Forms are obtainable from the Commonwealth Medical Association, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP, or the Caribbean Medical Confederation, 19 Ruthven Road, Kingston 10, Jamaica, West Indies.

## UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

### NOTTINGHAM

**Appointments.**—Dr. A. H. Short (senior lecturer, department of physiology); Mr. J. L. Wilkins (senior lecturer, department of surgery).

## 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.

### Monday, 27 September

INSTITUTE OF LARYNGOLOGY AND OTOTOLOGY.—5.30 p.m., Combined staff consultation clinical meeting.

### Tuesday, 28 September

KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL.—5.30 p.m., Dr. H. Steven Greer: Recent Research into Suicide.

### Thursday, 30 September

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL.—5.15 p.m., Mr. H. J. Fisher: Some Aspects of Amenorrhoea.

## H.M. FORCES

### ARMY

Lieutenant-Colonel B. A. Gavourin, from R.A.M.C., to be Colonel.

### ROYAL AIR FORCE

Air Commodore P. J. O'Connor to be Air Vice-Marshal.

Group Captain C. R. Griffin to be Air Commodore.

Wing Commander A. D. Moore to be Group Captain.

## Notice to Authors

When original articles and letters for publication are not submitted exclusively to the *British Medical Journal* this must be stated.

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# Fifty Years Ago

## The Baltic International Cholera Conference

From the *British Medical Journal*, 24 September 1921

It appears that conditions in Russia are reaching a point that may have serious effects upon the health of Europe. One of the most productive districts of Russia, formerly the granary both for that country and for Europe, has been stricken by drought, which has destroyed the crops and reduced the Russian people to a state of famine. An emigration that is almost a panic has started, we are told, from the famine districts, and the horrors of the flight of these starving people have been increased owing to the fact that such diseases as cholera, typhoid fever, and scurvy continue to follow them. The districts from which the emigration started are stated to be already so affected by cholera that combative measures are impossible in present circumstances. The cholera epidemic is gradually spreading over

the country, and the rest of Europe is faced with the danger of cholera. The three Baltic states, Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania, have decided, therefore, to assume the responsibility of making a sanitary cordon against the spread of the disease. A Baltic conference was suggested by Lieut.-Colonel Edward W. Ryan, M.D., the American Red Cross Commissioner to Western Russia and the Baltic States, and this conference was held in Riga from July 25th to 27th under his honorary presidency, with the Assistant Director of the Latvian Health Department, Dr. Kivitzki, in the chair. . . .

As soon as Russia should be definitely declared to be infected by cholera it was agreed to apply a strengthened military frontier protection, the three States closing their frontier with Russia; the exchange

stations for flax and salt were also to be closed, as well as the other transit stations, with the exception of certain notified border stations. Should a cholera case occur in a train all passengers were to be considered as contagious, and kept under supervision for a definite period. Infected refugee transports were expected to arrive within a short time at the border stations, and it would be necessary to submit these refugees to observation in quarantine stations before they set off for other places. . . . It was decided by the conference to request the aid of the American Red Cross in organizing European relief work, so that the first wall against cholera should not be in danger of collapse, and the infection spread from the harbours and the borders of the Baltic states throughout the world.