

Chemical Carcinogenesis and Cancers

By W. C. HUEPER and W. D. CONWAY. American Lecture Series No. 585, Pp. xx+744. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1965. \$20.

There is a continued rise in the production and consumption of carcinogenic chemicals. The prerequisite of prophylactic and preventive measures in the control of any disease is the availability of adequate information on the causes of the disease and on the sources and opportunities of exposure to such causes. Efforts to prevent chemically induced cancers have in the past been limited by the absence of a comprehensive co-ordinated and critical analysis of the information already available. This book goes a long way towards supplying such information. The experimental aspects and epidemiology of chemically induced cancers are considered in detail and the legal and social implications discussed. The known and suspected chemical carcinogens are fully represented. There are useful tables of deaths in different countries from various cancers and their distribution is illustrated by maps. The importance of environmental, socio-economic and occupational factors is well brought out. The middle portion of this book is concerned with technical aspects of planning and conducting investigation in chemical carcinogenesis, the protection of workers and the care of experimental animals, while the latter part deals with the prevention of environmental cancer, the control of occupational hazards and legal liability. The responsibilities of government, management and the individual are explored and standards of medical supervision suggested. The authors draw attention to the inadequacy of the present laws of compensation, in particular to the time clause which limits the presentation of claims to specified periods after cessation of exposure to the carcinogen. While these periods may be adequate for meeting the conditions associated with the great majority of occupational diseases they are insufficient in regard to occupational cancers, which may develop twenty years or more after exposure has ceased. We may also add the need for adequate follow-up and the wider use of cytological techniques to enable a malignant change to be detected at a treatable stage. The bibliography is extensive.

Problems of the Aged

Edited by CLYDE B. VEDDER, Ph.D., and ANNETTE S. LEFKOVITZ. Pp. xvii+259. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas 1964. \$7.50.

This book is edited jointly by a professor of sociology and a professor of nursing education. It consists of articles reprinted from various American journals, mainly Geriatrics and the American Journal of Nursing. The contributors for the most part are doctors but the nursing and social work professions are also represented.

The social and psychological aspects are well covered and there are some revealing articles on American nursing homes. There is even a militant article by the President of the American Medical Association attacking the Medicare programme. An article by Edwin T. Arnold on the principles of geriatrics contains some wise advice but perhaps the most impressive contribution is by Frederick A. Whitehouse on the psychological problems associated with strokes.

Inevitably the book abounds in generalities and there are few reports of original research, though the

report by Doris Schwartz on errors in the self administration of medicines by elderly people is a welcome exception.

Where the book does succeed very well is in conveying the essential flavour of geriatric work. Although presumably designed for nurses, Problems of the Aged would appear to be more suitable for doctors. It can be recommended as likely to promote a better understanding of the medical and social problems of the elderly.

Autoimmunity and Disease

L. E. GLYNN and E. J. HOLBOROW. Pp. vii + 420, illustrated. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1965. 60s.

The concept of autoimmunity or autoallergy or autoimmunopathy is upon us whether we like it or not; and the term autoimmunity is also very much with us because of common daily usage. If we can accept the concept and the term—as we must if we are to be “with it” in 1966—then this monograph is a joy to read. The first five chapters present the concept and thereafter every system, organ and tissue of the body is analysed from this viewpoint. They include the joints, nervous system, adrenal and thyroid glands, alimentary tract, kidney, liver, testis, eye, skin, blood and heart. This means a specialist chapter for every discipline and for every postgraduate. No matter how specialised he may have become, he should read them all.

This particular branch of immunology is now proliferating so rapidly that even this up-to-date monograph must have gone to press before the beautiful demonstration of non-organ specific mitochondrial circulating antibodies which help to segregate primary biliary cirrhosis as a well-defined autoimmune reaction. But this will undoubtedly appear in a second edition. Until it appears no postgraduate should be without the first edition.

Assessment of Cerebral Palsy

K. S. HOLT. Pp. vi + 214 illustrated. London: Lloyd Luke. 1965. 40s.

This is the first of two volumes by Dr. Holt on the assessment of cerebral palsy. It concentrates on motor function. The book is divided into broadly three sections. The first covers muscle function generally, and includes the assessment of muscle power, of the range of joint movements and of muscle tone. The second section deals with locomotion, and there are chapters on the techniques for assessment of this function, on posture and balance and on gait and abnormal movements. The third section is devoted to hand function and manipulative skills.

I enjoyed the latter section most. It is concise, lucid and extremely readable. The data is well presented and the photographic illustrations are excellent. The other two sections also contain a wealth of useful information. However, in a book of this nature, it is always a difficult task to present data in a sufficiently simple manner to be acceptable to the person without much theoretical training, and at the same time to be sufficiently critical for the specialist in the field. It is hard to please everybody.

I found some parts (e.g. on muscle activity and length, p.17) over-simplified and repetitive. Others (e.g. the elucidation of spasticity, p.75) were not at all clear, and would have benefited from more detailed discussion and explanation. I also see no advantage in having definitions for such terms as