
This volume will be welcomed by all familiar with Snapper's Medical Clinics on Bone Diseases, the second edition of which was published in 1949. The author has continued his researches of the literature and has in fact done a great deal of work in bringing up to date his knowledge of the affections dealt with in the previous volume. He deals fully with their treatment.

This is hardly a book for students or those with no experience of the skeletal errors dealt with, but should be of great service to those with some special experience, particularly when they run against a case of exceptional difficulty or one displaying an unusual complication. One trouble is to follow all the elaborate and deep biochemical statements made or quoted. The first chapter, dealing with the Physiology of Bones, is much too deep for those "in the daily practice of medicine." One wonders how many medical men in this country can appreciate the meaning of the title of the second chapter, viz., Semantics of Bone Disease. The author evidently prefers to discuss the rarer and more complicated types of case rather than the straightforward affections, which in some instances are rather neglected. Fanconi syndrome is very well dealt with, and he includes a good list of references for biochemical details, but his discussion becomes very complicated later, not unexpectedly. An interesting statement is that coeliac disease must last at least two years before bone changes become visible. Osteoporosis and the treatment of its various causes are well dealt with.

One of the best chapters is that dealing with hyperparathyroidism, but not for the student. Again there is an excellent list of references. The author quotes several reports of multiple parathyroid adenomas, in two of which three adenomas occurred, and in one case four adenomas: he has heard of one case with five tumours. In discussing renal osteitis fibrosa the author states that osteitis fibrosa always develops when rapid absorption of bone takes place, regardless of the cause of the bone absorption. In discussing osteitis fibrosa disseminata he claims to have reported, in 1932, the first case of what is now generally called Albright's syndrome, in a girl with widespread osteofibrosis and with brown naevi on face and chest, who experienced her first menarche at seven years.

The chapter dealing with myelomatosis is one of the best: it is up to date and contains a very full discussion of all the latest reports and information. The latest test for Bence-Jones protein he states is "paper-electrophoresis." For Hodgkin's disease, when resistant to x-ray treatment he recommends nitrogen mustard intravenously. His discussion of osteoporosis circumscripta cranii, whether this is or is not a feature of Paget's disease, is not very helpful. He evidently regards most cases showing leontiasis—and at least some without—as cases of Paget's disease. With regard to Gaucher's disease he quotes an article published in 1956 which states that increase of acid phosphatase "regularly occurs" in this disease. Among his radiographs of this affection—all radiographs are together at the end of the book—is one showing typical and well marked osteoporosis of the spine, hardly a good illustration of the radiographic changes seen in Gaucher's disease. The final chapter, dealing with "Differential Diagnosis of Bone Lesions," is very good indeed and could be appreciated by any medical man. The author gives a list of nine affections in which he regards metastatic calcification as a dangerous complication. As a final criticism of this valuable book one must refer to what he says about osteogenesis imperfecta, a bone affection he does not deal with; it was rather a shock to read that "generalised absorption of bone is a constant phenomenon in osteogenesis imperfecta, so-called fragility of bone."—Thomas Fairbank.

MODERN TRENDS IN SURGICAL MATERIALS. Edited by Leon Gillis, M.B.E., M.Ch.(Orth.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.), F.R.C.S. (Edin.), D.L.O. Consultant Surgeon, Queen Mary's (Roehampton) Hospital, East Ham Memorial Hospital and St John's Hospital, London; with twenty-one other contributors. 10\(\times\)7\(\sfrac{1}{4}\) in. Pp. xi+275, with 96 figures and 2 tables. Index. 1958. London: Butterworth & Co. (Publishers) Ltd. Price 72s. 6d.

For more than two hundred years physicians have had their pharmacopoeias in which are specified the characters of the drugs inserted into the human body enterally, parenterally and transdermally. In modern times national authorities have shown interest in sponsoring official publications setting out pharmaceutical nomenclature, methods of manufacture and dosage and have set up schedules of poisons and dangerous drugs. It is, therefore, surprising that so little has been done along similar lines for the materials inserted by surgeons into the human body. True it is that this type of surgery has only been widely practised in the last fifty years; especially during the latter half of this period. The grading of sutures, the testing for toxicity in plastics, the assessment of the