but medical students and undergraduates would need to progress to a larger, more complete work. It would be of value as a general overview of neurophysiology for people working in related fields such as medical physicists, laboratory technicians, speech therapists and similar professions.

S. G. BAYLISS,
Royal Surrey County Hospital,
Guildford, Surrey.

Leukaemia


Leukaemia must surely be one of the most exciting areas in which a medical scientist could currently be involved. The dramatic advances in treatment over the last 2 or 3 decades are now being mirrored by an understanding of the basic cellular and sub-cellular mechanisms. Indeed, new bone marrows are being exchanged for old! So how can this subject be turned into such heavy reading? The answer can only be, by committee.

Fortunately, the content of this particular Workshop is excellent, with a comprehensive review of the biology of both leukaemic cells in man and sub-human species and their normal equivalents, by some of the most outstanding workers in the field. Obviously, there must be advantages in publishing the proceedings of Workshops. This is clearly seen in the way in which both sides of the argument are presented, this being best illustrated in the section on aetiology of leukaemia. In fact, it is this last section in which some of the most recent and potentially useful developments have been made, especially the identification by Gallo and his co-workers, at last long, of a virus which appears to have a definite role in the development of an albeit rare type of human leukaemia. This work is extremely topical and of great interest, especially the probable role of virus in human oncogenic expression and the relationship of products of those oncogenes to cell proliferation.

Many other topics are dealt with, including the application of immunology to the diagnosis of leukaemia and a comprehensive review of cytogenetics in leukaemia, a topic likely to become more important in the future for identification of patients likely to perform poorly with conventional therapy. A further section dealing with the recognised patterns of leukaemia cell growth in vitro speculates about the possible future benefit of predictive tests of leukaemia sensitivity to various therapeutic agents based on the in vitro sensitivity of cultured leukaemic cells. On this topic, the clinician is yet to be convinced.

For me, the most exciting section was certainly that on the aetiology of leukaemia with the often controversial evidence for the role of such diverse agents as radiation and virus being comprehensively reviewed.

This publication should certainly be of interest to both basic scientists and clinicians working in the field of leukaemia, one of the major attractions being the extensive bibliography with 581 references.

H. GRANT PRENTICE,
Royal Free Hospital,
London NW3 2QG.

Manson's Tropical Diseases


Is tropical medicine synonymous with medicine in the tropics? Most people who have worked in the tropics would deny this, and would restrict the use of the term 'tropical diseases' to those diseases which, by virtue of biological, climatic, social or environmental conditions occur exclusively or predominantly in the tropics and subtropics. Manson's original work, first published in 1898, was deliberately named a manual, 'of handy size; for the exigencies of travel and of tropical life are, as a rule, incompatible with big volumes'. Clearly, the situation has changed and this, the 18th edition, continues the pattern of growth of standard textbooks. The 18th edition weighs 2 kg, compared to 1.75 kg for the 17th edition. The contents are arranged in the same basic style as in previous editions; a short introduction on non-infective disorders and anaemia in the tropics is followed by sections of aetologically organized descriptions of tropical diseases; protozoal, helminthic, viral, bacterial, spirochaetal, rickettsial, fungal. The tropical venereal diseases lymphogranuloma venereum and granuloma inguinale are included here. The last 5 sections deal with diseases of the environment, nutritional disorders, venous and poisons, ophthalmology, and drugs. There are 3 appendices, 186 pages long, dealing with detailed descriptive parasitology, helminthology and entomology. The book purports to serve two aims: as a textbook for students and as a general reference book for practitioners in the field.

Students, I believe, will find too much here: a smaller manual dealing with clinical parasitology would be all that is required (even for students in tropical countries). If only the truly tropical diseases had been included, the book would have been first class. However, the introduction of non-tropical (but none the less important) topics, has led to serious imbalances and omissions. Pulmonary tuberculosis, perhaps the most important single tropical disease after malaria, is dealt with in 4 pages, while brucellosis, an unimportant disease in the tropics, receives 7 pages. Gonorrhoea, of huge importance, is not mentioned, hepatitis is summarily dealt with in 2½ pages (and excludes virtually all the clinical aspects of hepatitis B). Polymyelitis is dismissed in one page, and measles in 2 and so on. The section on drugs includes some curious compounds (Glucarubin, pelleterine, stilbazolium, etc), which even the author admits are not generally available, so why include them?

The authors are clearly confused: is this to be a textbook of tropical diseases, or a textbook of medicine in the tropics? If the former, it is too extensive, if the latter, too imbalanced.

Now, the good news. The publishers have radically altered the format of the book. The cover contains a striking photomicrograph of the head of a mosquito: the book is larger in size, the print is arranged in 2 columns and much easier to scan, the quality of the line drawings is excellent: numerous, new black and white photographs have been included: the references have been updated. The cost (£30) seems reasonable for a book of this size.

Clearly, this is a textbook which should be on the shelves of any medical library. If (when) I return to the tropics, I might pack it in my sea-mail, but it will not be a priority book for my travelling library.

G. H. REE,
Hospital for Tropical Diseases,
London NW1 0PE.

Medical Data Interpretation For MRCP


This second edition maintains the high standards which made the first so popular and helpful for MRCP candidates. There are 10 chapters of questions covering all systems and the final chapter provides the answers with helpful explanations attached to these answers.

If a candidate masters the 300 interpretations in this book, he should have no difficulty in the Data section of the MRCP examination. It is strongly recommended for just this purpose.

D. GERAIN'T JAMES,
Royal Northern Hospital,
London N7.

The Newborn Child


This is the 5th edition of this successful primer of neonatal medicine. In the first 4 chapters, the care of the normal newborn is dealt with in some detail. There is then a chapter on the preterm infant, including
Manson's Tropical Diseases

G. H. Ree

Postgrad Med J 1983 59: 476
doi: 10.1136/pgmj.59.693.476-a

Updated information and services can be found at:

http://pmj.bmj.com/content/59/693/476.2.citation

These include:

Email alerting service
Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/