

THE POSTGRADUATE

Book Review Supplement

S.F.A. CATALOGUE OF MEDICAL FILMS

Pp. xvi + 195. London: Harvey and Blythe. 1952. 15s.

This is a catalogue of medical films published for the Royal Society of Medicine and the Scientific Film Association. It should be in every medical library.

PROGRESS IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Edited by RAYMOND DALEY, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P. and HENRY G. MILLER, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.M. 2nd Edition. Pp. xi + 426 with 43 illustrations. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1952. 30s.

This book was first published in 1948. It has now been almost entirely re-written and is considerably longer and more comprehensive. It is written by thirteen authors, all of whom are experts in their subjects, and covers a very wide field of medicine.

The book is mainly limited to advances which the authors believe to be of permanent clinical value and which can now be classed as "accepted". The recent progress in clinical medicine has been so extensive that it is now found possible to omit much that is highly specialized and to concentrate mainly on conditions familiar to the general physician.

The editors acknowledge the recent great contributions of surgery to many fields of medicine and suggest that the modern physician should carefully and critically study the scope and limitations of operative procedures, since it is he who is so often called upon for the initial recommendation for surgery. This is especially true in diseases of the chest and in the excellent section on this subject the indications for thoracoplasty, lung resection and extrapleural pneumothorax have been discussed. In the neurological section recent surgical operations for relief of intractable pain and of extrapyramidal involuntary movements have been described; as also have the more controversial procedures of thymectomy for myasthenia gravis and of the surgical treatment of spontaneous subarachnoid haemorrhage. In the psychiatric field the indications for prefrontal leucotomy and topectomy have been discussed.

In the face of so much surgery in this medical book it is rather disappointing to find hardly any

mention of valvulotomy for mitral stenosis—surely one of the greatest surgical advances into a previously medical field, and one calling above all for careful assessment and selection by the physician in co-operation with the surgeon. This omission is, no doubt, due to the recent development of the operation and to the, as yet, controversial nature of the indications.

In a book of this high quality it is extremely difficult to allot special praise and unnecessary to find general fault with any particular section. Possibly the chapters on gastro-enterology, metabolic disorders, diseases of the chest and neurology are outstanding. It is certainly no adverse criticism of the sections on electrocardiography and psychosomatic disorders to state a wish that they had been longer.

This is an excellent book. Every chapter is good. It is well written and well produced, and is packed with authoritative information. The many references at the end of each section encourage further and more specialized reading. It is of special value to general physicians and to specialists who are anxious to keep up to date in general medicine. It is also recommended to membership candidates and should be of great interest and considerable value to many general practitioners. The price is 30s., and in the reviewer's opinion it is well worth it.

STUDIES IN UNDERNUTRITION, WUPPERTAL, 1946-49

(M.R.C. Special Report Series No. 275)

By members of the Department of Experimental Medicine, Cambridge & Associated Workers. Pp. xiv + 404, illustrated. London: H.M.S.O., 1951. 12s. 6d.

After the recent war, a number of experts in various aspects of metabolic disease visited Wuppertal in Germany. This report of their work opens with an excellent review of hunger oedema; there are 27 subsequent chapters which deal with a great variety of subjects, ranging from the arginine-lysine ratio in the serum proteins to the effect of undernutrition on hepatic structure and function. This book is the result of much excellent work and adds considerable information to our knowledge of the effects of under-nutrition.