

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHEST SURGERY

By GEOFFREY FLAVELL, F.R.C.S., M.R.C.P. Pp. xiv + 354, with 49 illustrations and 128 X-ray plates. London: Oxford University Press. 30s. 1957.

This book is written primarily for undergraduate students but it will be of considerable interest to all seeking basic information on current chest surgical practise.

There are three sections: surgery of the chest wall, lungs and pleura, surgery of the oesophagus and surgery of the heart and great vessels. The text is illustrated by 128 X-ray plates which generally have been well chosen and reproduced. There are also numerous line drawings which do inform and clarify the text.

Many 'case reports' are included; these are the sort of reminiscences familiar on ward rounds but they do read well. They are there often to illustrate the commonest diagnostic difficulties and mistakes and to drive such points home to students is a cornerstone of teaching. A spirit of enthusiasm for the subject pervades the book; although the opinions that are expressed are forceful and emphatic one can have no serious quarrel with any of them.

This book will surely be popular with medical students and it can be recommended to postgraduate students studying for higher surgical and medical qualifications who are looking for a readable basic survey of thoracic surgical practise.

L.L.B.

COMBINED TEXTBOOK OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY

Edited by DUGALD BAIRD, B.Sc., M.D., D.P.H., F.R.C.O.G. 6th Edition. Pp. xii + 936, with 492 illustrations. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1957. 95s.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge indebtedness to this excellent work which in a previous edition, served the reviewer well enough to enable him to pass his qualifying examinations and help considerably along the path to a higher degree.

There are great advantages in having a textbook that combines the subjects of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, for the anatomy and physiology and to a certain extent, the psychology and the pathology of the two subjects are the same, or overlap. This makes for economy of reading.

On the other hand, such a large work is apparently beyond the province of any one writer and Professor Dugald Baird, who contributes more than any other, has had to call in the assistance of 16 of his colleagues who either trained or practise in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow or St. Andrews. So many writers naturally makes for divergence in style, but the editing is so skilful that there is no annoying overlapping nor, on careful search, any marked deficiency in the text. What is more, the

Index is excellent, as is essential in a book of study for examinations.

To single out some chapters as outstanding, both for the information they give and the clarity of their exposition, I would select those from the pen of Professor R. J. Kellar on the Physiology of the Reproductive System and the development of the Embryo. These are difficult subjects, not yet fully understood, but Professor Kellar manages to reveal what is known and not confuse the unknown. There must have been close collaboration between him and T. N. McGregor who writes on the Disorders of Female Sex Function. In fact, here is an instance of where the book is so well integrated.

On the other hand, Dr. Leitch's chapter of Nutrition in Pregnancy and Lactation, while teaching your reviewer more new information than any other chapter, was pitched possibly on a slightly more academic and postgraduate level than, for instance, Professor Young's down-to-earth anatomy.

There is a chapter on Vital Statistics which incorporates much recent work from Aberdeen on Peri-Natal Mortality.

There is a sound chapter on Psychology.

Obstetric management is faultlessly done, keeping to standard techniques of proved safety, well described.

Similarly, the main chapters on Gynaecology are well and interestingly written.

Lastly, Messrs. E. & S. Livingstone, the publishers have provided a well printed book which for its size, is both pleasant to handle and is fully up to their usual very high standards of book production. I suspect that the price of the book has been kept reasonable by their willingness to use blocks from other of their successful productions; and illustrations of the high standard of those borrowed from Wilfred Shaw's Operative Gynaecology to demonstrate total hysterectomy adorn several of the pages of this present work.

E.E.P.

THE RESPIRATORY MUSCLES AND THE MECHANICS OF BREATHING

By E. J. MORAN CAMPBELL, M.D., Ph.D., B.Sc., M.R.C.P. Pp. xvi + 131, with 32 diagrams. London: Lloyd-Luke Ltd. 1958. 20s.

This book seems to be unique in its field and will certainly be of great interest to workers in a number of different fields. Many of the views expressed are surprising, although they are backed with the evidence of Dr. Campbell's own research and a wide reading of the literature. There is no doubt that the main section of the book, on the functions of the respiratory muscles, will be more readily understood than the sub-section on mechanics of breathing. This appears to be too condensed for any but those who have already worked in the field and it is suggested that if a second edition is called for this section should be widely expanded and also simplified.