

## Book Reviews

### HUTCHISON'S CLINICAL METHODS

Mason, S. and Swash, M., The English Language Book Society and Bailliere Tindall, London, 1980, 17th Edition, 495 pp. 117 figs. 12 tables 6 black-white plates. Paperback £1.20.

Written for medical students, Hutchison's Clinical Methods was first published in 1897 with the 16th edition being published in 1975. The present edition has been substantially revised by Mason and Swash of the London Hospital and include several new chapters including haematology, the abdomen and the examination of the unconscious patient.

The book retains its original aim, namely, to describe those methods of clinical investigation by the application of which a correct diagnosis can alone be arrived at. The book begins by dealing with the methods of case-taking in general, and includes a general scheme for the investigation of medical cases. It then goes into the same general considerations and appearances related to both the physical and mental state of the patient. A systematic look at the skin, nails, hair, abdomen, excreta, respiratory system, cardiovascular system, and the nervous system are then covered. The examination of the unconscious patient, the locomotor system and the eye, ear, nose and throat follow. A chapter dealing with the examination of the child then follows and includes the basic developmental screening examinations that are so important in assessing the development of the child. Finally, the book closes with a chapter on blood and another on the laboratory.

It is illustrated with 117 figures, including 6 black-white plates and 8 colour plates, and 12 tables. In this day and age when medical publications can be so expensive, this valuable book that has served generations of medical students for over 80 years is a must at £1.20. Every medical student entering into clinical studies should keep a copy handy for quick reference while he is in the process of learning basic clinical methods. The book's low cost makes it one of the few books all medical students in the developing world can afford.

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GLOSSARY ON AIR POLLUTION, Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 1980 (WHO Regional Publications, European Series, No. 9). 114 pp. Price: Sw.fr. 12.

Air pollution has become an increasingly important

problem in many parts of the world including the cities of Southeast Asia. Since most of the terms used in the air pollution literature come from a wide range of disciplines, particularly chemistry, physics, engineering and technology, it has become important to establish a means for correct and meaningful interdisciplinary communication. The World Health Organization has thus produced this useful glossary on air pollution to bridge the gap between the various disciplines.

The glossary reflects internationally standardised terminology. The definitions of chemical terms are largely in accordance with those of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, and a large number of definitions are quoted verbatim from standard vocabularies published by the following international organizations: International Commission of Radiation Units and Measurements, International Electrotechnical Commission, International Organization for Standardization, Organisation Internationale de Metrologie Legale, and World Meteorological Organization. Numerous terms, particularly those used only in air pollution studies, have not yet been defined by an authoritative international body; for such terms the definitions are based on prevailing international usage. The glossary contains over 600 definitions laid out in alphabetic order. The clear layout and extensive cross referencing make this glossary an extremely handy one and would be a most useful document for all those concerned with air pollution.

*P.C.Y. CHEN*

VACCINATION CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL: SITUATION AS ON 1 JANUARY 1981 AND HEALTH ADVICE TO TRAVELLERS, Geneva, World Health Organization, 1981. 65 pages. Price: Sw. Fr. 18.

The rapidity of air travel as well as the increasing volume of air travel has meant that communicable diseases can easily be spread from one country to another and that travellers unfamiliar to the countries they visit, can easily acquire a number of endemic communicable diseases.

Now that smallpox has been eradicated, yellow fever is the only disease covered by the International Health Regulations for which there is an epidemiological justification for health authorities to require a vaccination

certificate of international travellers. On the other hand, there are many communicable diseases not covered by the Regulations that may be important not only to such travellers but also to their families and their communities when they return from their travels. Prominent among these are malaria (of which an increasing number of cases is reported annually in countries where it is not normally found and is unfamiliar to most physicians), a number of other insect-borne infections, the many forms of diarrhoeal disease, and a wide variety of ailments associated with food and water.

To reflect this situation, the familiar yellow booklet published annually by the World Health Organization under the title "Vaccination Certificate Requirements for International Travel" has undergone a thorough overhaul, as its new and fuller title indicates. To be sure, the essential and important information on which countries require what certificates is still listed, but for every appropriate country or territory in that list an indication of the risk of acquiring malaria has been added (in many cases the areas of risk within a country are specified).

New sections have been added specifying some of the more important health risks to which travellers may be subject including environmental effects, risks from food and drink and hazards from arthropods. Schema for the management of international travellers with fever or diarrhoea have also to be added. In addition to the above, the geographical distribution of potential health hazards to travellers as well as some precautionary measures to be taken by travellers have been included in this book. A five-page table showing the mode of transmission and geographical occurrence of important food-borne and water-borne infections is included. A country index and a subject index as well as maps showing the occurrence of malaria and yellow fever and a table of drugs for use as chemoprophylaxis against malaria, complete the book.

This book is immensely useful to the medical profession, tourist agencies, airline operators and travellers themselves who all share a concern and responsibility for protecting the health of the individual traveller and for preventing the spread of disease internationally.

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KHOO, F. Y. (1981) X-RAYS IN SINGAPORE 1896-1975. The Singapore University Press for the Radiological Society of Singapore; 93 pages.

It is a pleasure to read Dr. Khoo Fun Yong's book. It contains a wealth of information that would satisfy the

most inquisitive of minds regarding the development of x-ray services in Singapore and to some extent in parts of Malaysia.

Medicine has made rapid advances that it is not possible for any one person to know enough in its specialised discipline. Hence we get apart from specialists in major fields, others who narrow down their areas to become what may be termed as 'super specialists'. The present day doctors have little time for reading of related medical literature that are not of direct benefit to their patients' needs. Yet such reading would help to make the doctor a more complete man, able to appreciate the difficulties of his predecessors and to appreciate his comparative good luck and perhaps to contemplate on the even better luck that those after him will have.

Although the book deals mainly with development of x-rays in Singapore, Peninsular Malaysia is given a fairly good coverage, especially the part that was known as the Federated Malay States. What happened in Singapore could more or less give a good idea as to what really did happen here.

It is most interesting to note that barely two years after Roentgen discovered x-rays in 1885 in Germany, x-rays were demonstrated in Taiping and a year later in Singapore. Considering the distance and methods of communication available in those days, this was indeed an achievement. This, I am sure is known only to a small number of people prior to it being known to Dr. Khoo.

The book also gives a number of historical developments both in Singapore and Peninsular Malaysia in respect of medical development other than Radiology, which again are known only to a few and would be lost to subsequent generations unless properly documented.

The book also contains an account of recent developments of the radiological services in Singapore. While this may be common knowledge to those in the field of radiology, it is sure to make interesting reading to others outside it.

Dr. Khoo is to be congratulated for his effort. Dr. Khoo has certainly spent his spare time in a very creditable manner in writing this book. It certainly is a book that is well worth reading so as to give the reader a balanced idea of the development of medicine in Singapore and in Malaysia and so to appreciate the present status of the medical services in these countries.

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