BOOK REVIEWS


Several years ago, in his Hematology Clinic, Professor Kassirsky set up a laboratory of genetics where he and his co-workers have, over the past six years or so, applied modern procedures in genetics to the study of their patients. While the experience so gained is the basis for this book, Doctor Kassirsky has sought to acquaint the reader with the development and most recent achievements in this new field of medicine, and to present what is currently known about the role of hereditary characteristics in the pathogenesis of diseases of the blood. In addition to the experiences in his own clinic, he draws upon that of his contributors, including data obtained in West Africa, and refers extensively to the great volume of world literature which has grown up on this subject; the great majority of his references are non-Soviet.

The first third of the book is an up to date review of the development of medical genetics from the laws of Mendel to the role of the chromosome and the function and structure of nucleic acids. Also discussed are the mechanisms of mitosis, mutation, penetration and expression, relating these to hereditary blood diseases. The remainder of the book consists of chapters on a wide variety of hematologic disorders with comments upon current knowledge of hereditary patterns, molecular biochemistry, genetic structure and chromosomal changes where appropriate. This is supplemented by clinical data, photographs, maps, diagrams, karyograms, etc.

Red cell disorders presented include the hemolytic anemias—spherocytic, nonspherocytic and G6PD deficiency, sidero-acrystic anemia, Fanconi’s anemia, and hemolytic disease of the newborn, and there is also an extensive discussion of the various forms of prophyria, the hemoglobinopathies, and the syndromes of hyperbilirubinemia. Hemorrhagic disorders studied include the various coagulation factor deficiencies, platelet abnormalities (including ITP) and telangiectasia. The hereditary neutropenias are described and there are sections on Pelger-Huet anomaly, Gaucher’s disease and benign lymphocytosis.

The final chapters are set aside for a discussion of one of Professor Kassirsky’s lifelong interests—the leukoses and reticuloses. This section opens with a presentation of the genetic concept of the development of the leukoses which he evolved during the intensive study of 139 cases of familial leukemias and other sources. He firmly believes in the hereditary basis of the leukoses with exogenous factors precipitating the disease, and looks forward to the time when, should leukemia be detected in a family, that the basic genetic abnormality can be identified and, possibly by some physical or chemical means, corrected as a prophylactic measure in the relatives and perhaps as a therapeutic measure in the patient. The final chapters enumerate the chromosomal abnormalities observed in patients with chronic granulocytic leukemia, acute leukemia, osteomyelosclerosis, myelofibrosis, erythremia, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, macroglobulinemia, myeloma, lymphogranuloma and lymphosarcoma. As is common in Soviet textbooks, there is no index.

This book, a remarkably compact yet comprehensive survey of the field, with interesting clinical observations and theoretical speculations, has a wealth of bibliographic references and indicates how well informed are our Soviet colleagues.—John Vaughn, M.D.
TECHNIQUES IN BLOOD GROUPING. *Dunsford and Bowley.*

Charles C Thomas
301–327 E. Lawrence Avenue
Springfield, Illinois 62703

Pages: Vol. I—264
Vol. II—534
Price: $15.00

This two column, loose-leaf Techniques in Blood Grouping is ideally suited for the day-to-day problems in blood grouping and blood banking procedures.—*William Dameshek*

IMMUNOHEMATOLOGY. *Chester M. Zmijewski.*

Appleton Century Crofts
440 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

Pages: 262
Price: $13.75

This book is written in a simplified style. It is an ideal vehicle for the neophyte in the study of the red cell blood group systems and is furthermore enriched by a chapter on leukocyte antigens and antibodies and by an appendix on methods.—*William Dameshek*

CLINICAL PHYSIOLOGY. *E. J. Moran Campbel, C. J. Dickinson and J. D. Slater.*

F. A. Davis Company
1914 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Pages: 672
Price: $11.00

Formed elements of blood and hemostasis are dealt with in less than fifty pages and immune mechanisms in about thirty pages. There is a rather good chapter on genetics and also on sex and reproduction.—*William Dameshek*