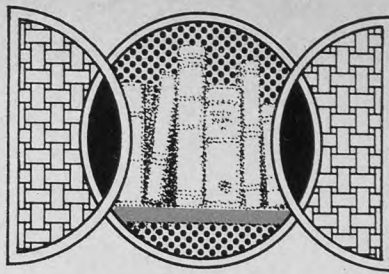


Book Reviews



Illustrated Manual of Laboratory Diagnosis (2nd Edition). R. Douglas Collins. J. B. Lippincott Publishers, Philadelphia, 1975, 344 pp., \$29.00.

This book was compiled by an internist with help from contributing editors trained in specific areas of laboratory diagnosis. Their goal was to offer a condensed discussion of laboratory tests available for specific disease entities that would be useful to the student and the physician in clinical practice.

The volume is organized in terms of specific laboratory findings and their relation to disease states. The index allows one to look up either an abnormal laboratory test, or an abnormal symptom or disease entity and find a synopsis of the pertinent laboratory work. There is a chapter on the auto-analyzer describing briefly the apparatus and the methods that are in use, as well as some specific abnormalities commonly seen in this screening-type test. There is also a chapter on the multiphasic screening of asymptomatic patients, and an attempt is made to be as complete as possible in order not to miss any disease in the screening procedure. A chapter on laboratory work-up of symptoms and diseases is in list form which gives the doctor a checklist to work from in evaluating difficult diseases or symptoms. Descriptions of specific laboratory tests and how they are performed are kept to a minimum in this volume, and an attempt is made to give a practical, short, concise evaluation when these descriptions are necessary to an understanding of the text. The book is very useful as a checklist or review for those people who are unfamiliar with specific diagnoses and what tests should be run in order to rule out conflicting illnesses.

There has been a fine effort to be complete, and also to be aware of the limitations and cost of laboratory work so the proper emphasis can be applied. The attempt to substitute laboratory work for basic factors in the physical examination is decried in

all areas of the book. Illustrations are used extensively and, although they are not essential to understanding of the text, they may serve as an illustrative reinforcement.

The book is an easy, well organized, and readable reference for the family physician, as well as individuals who are also interested in the laboratory as it relates to disease processes. Those who wish to update their understanding of some of the recent laboratory tests will find this book valuable. It would also be useful to the allied health professional, who needs to study specific disease entities and know why particular tests are being done.

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Medicine in a Changing Society. Lawrence Corey, Steven E. Saltman and Michael F. Epstein (eds). The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1974, 228 pp., \$4.95.

This book is based on the presentations made in a course called "Medicine in a Changing Society" which began in 1969 at the University of Michigan Medical School. The three editors were members of the sophomore class which initiated development of the course.

The four aims of this course and book are: (1) to provide more knowledge about how health services are and are not being provided in the society, (2) to make possible an in-depth understanding of the problems inherent in the present method of delivery of health care, (3) to develop insights into how current developments in society affect the delivery of health services, and (4) to stimulate thinking on selected proposals that hold the promise of more effectively relating the medical profession to a changing society.

The book is divided into two parts: (1) The Need for Change (seven

chapters varying in length from five to 24 pages) and (2) Medicine in Transition (ten chapters varying in length from nine to 17 pages). The two parts might be considered as two separate conferences but with some overlap of content. The keynote address of the first one, presented by the three editors, is entitled "Society and Health: A Modern American Dilemma." The keynoter of the second conference is Edward M. Kennedy and his presentation is entitled "Changing the Face of American Health." All of the other chapters (or presentations) in the book are by noted authorities; each begins with a short summary and all but one end with an adequate number of references. All are most readable. If they are not classics now, several could easily be given this rating.

Six basic themes recur throughout this collection of presentations: (1) Obtaining mainstream medical care is a problem affecting all socioeconomic strata in America; this problem is, however, accentuated among the people who need medical care the most — the elderly and the poor. (2) Financial barriers to health must be removed. (3) Maldistributed and fractionated health services need correction. (4) New patterns of organization that emphasize health maintenance and prevention must be developed. (5) Health knowledge and technology require the expertise of many: health professionals, administrators, consumers, and paramedical personnel. (6) Many time-proved methods of provoking change within the delivery system exist; however, these programs require massive expansion since they presently affect only a small fraction of the American public.

The contents of the book are relevant not only for family physicians but for all persons concerned with improving health care delivery. If the repetition of the basic themes heard many times from the podium and read in many articles reminds them of a broken record, they should also remember they are, as yet, doing a far from optimal job. In fact, those involved with family medicine and practice particularly should be thinking of new and more effective ways to get their messages heard.

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