

Medical Textbook Review

Reviews by Victor Daniels and Steven White Pp. 63 1977
Can be obtained from Medical Textbook Review, Clinical School Offices, University of Cambridge, Addenbrooke's Hospital, (Level 5), Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 2QQ, U K £0 75 including postage Paperback

The purpose of this publication is indicated by the authors in their preface "Our aim has been a practical one — to provide a set of brief, down-to-earth reviews of books primarily from the point of view of their value as textbooks for medical students and junior hospital doctors in training for higher diplomas Accordingly, the approach is a pragmatic one, concentrating on key features contributing to a book's utility in preparing for exams The function of the review is to help students, their teachers and librarians select books which will be of direct practical value "

The number of books reviewed has been kept down to around 500 and are what are considered "good books" Most have been reviewed by the two reviewers personally in the light of their own "shop floor" experience of an excellent clinical course but they have sometimes sought advice from specialist colleagues The pre-clinical books are grouped under Anatomy, Biochemistry, Pathology, Pharmacology and Physiology with sub-headings as appropriate, while the Clinical section has 25 headings from "Accidents and Emergency" to "Venereology" and finally a selection of Atlases and Medical Dictionaries Books of the type "Organic Chemistry for Medical Students" seem to have fallen through the net Students at the beginning of a course often ask which textbook is the "best-buy" as if books could be given various star ratings for clarity, wear resistance of binding, up-to-dateness, value for money in pages per dollar, etc While this sort of consumer guide is often easy for commodities and household equipment, it is probably not possible with books since requirements differ so much from one student to another and from one curriculum to another The best advice to give the student is possibly to suggest that he makes his own choice from a list of recommended texts after he has browsed through them to see which seems to appeal most to him personally from its style, academic level, cost, etc The *Medical Textbook Review* provides him with a guide to form for many of the main runners in whatever field interests him and he can then decide which horse to put his money on The dynamic nature of publishing makes it difficult for the *Review* to be completely up-to-date on new editions, costs, etc so etc so that frequent editions are required Copies are still available of the current edition and a new one is in preparation

We are grateful to Drs Daniels and White for permission to quote their reviews of the sixteen books listed under "Biochemistry" which will serve to illustrate the style and treatment of the 500 or so reviews At a mere 75 pence, we would give the *Review* a five star rating for value for money and copies should certainly be readily available for reference in all Medical Schools and the keen student may well like to have his own copy

B A Kilby

Biochemistry: A Comprehensive Review

By N V Bhagavan Lippincott, 1974 964 pages, £13 20

This is a useful concise book Excellent for cramming purposes — contains little redundancy History and experimental methods are missing but this does not detract from the book as a whole

Basic Biochemistry for Medical Students

Edited by P N Campbell and B A Kilby Academic Press, 1975 472 pages, £6 80

This is a refreshingly written, well presented book The authors are from Leeds Biochemistry Department and the book is centred around their course Very precise

Outlines of Biochemistry

Fourth edition by P E Conn and P K Stumpf, John Wiley, 1976 629 pages, £6 45

This is a pleasant book designed for 'non-majors' in biochemistry The presentation is quite nice and easy to learn from but it is not very advanced

Review of Physiological Chemistry

Sixteenth edition by H A Harper Lange Medical Publications, 1977 704 pages, \$13 00

This is one of the excellent Lange group of books designed for the medical student It is very easy to read, up-to-date and provides a physiological slant to basic biochemistry

Intermediary Metabolism and its Regulation

By J. Lerner, Prentice-Hall, 1971 308 pages, £7 95

This is one of the useful *Foundations of Modern Biochemistry* series This is an enjoyable, very well illustrated book which considers most aspects of metabolic regulation Certainly worth looking at

Biochemistry

Second edition by A L Lenninger Worth Publishers Inc , 1975 1104 pages, about £12.00

There is no doubt Lenninger changed the face of biochemistry publishing It is a very refreshing book on what was a dull subject The lay-out, style and clarity are excellent

An Introduction to Biochemical Reaction Mechanisms

By J N Lowe and L L Ingleham Prentice-Hall, 1974 145 pages, £11 95

This is one of a very useful series of books in the *Foundations of Modern Biochemistry* series It is fairly advanced but quite succinct and well presented For those of you interested in chemistry this book would be a useful supplement

Biochemistry — The Chemical Reactions of Living Cells

By D E Metzler Academic Press Inc , 1977 1129 pages, £17 75

This isn't just another book in biochemistry, it's different The author has used as a primary theme the chemical reactions of cells It is very well produced and covers a wide area of biochemistry It deserves to be successful but its price may be inhibiting

Biological Chemistry

Second edition by H. R Mahler and E. H Cordes Harper and Row, 1972 1009 pages, £11 95

A fairly heavy-going but thorough text Used to be very popular A new edition (I think) is in preparation A simpler introduction to the subject can be found in the authors *Basic Biological Chemistry*

Biochemistry: A Case-Oriented Approach

Second edition by R Montgomery, R L Dryer, T W Conway and A A Spector C V Mosby, 1977 720 pages, about \$11 50

This is a useful text in that it relates basic biochemistry with clinical case studies Very easy to read and covers biochemistry for 2nd M B purposes This second edition contains an additional 38 new case problems