

## Book reviews

TUMOURS OF THE THYROID GLAND. (Les tumeurs du corps thyroïde.) Edited by A. Appaix. 468 pages with 130 figures and 73 tables. S. Karger, Basel 1966. Price: 75 SFR/DM.

The volume contains papers presented at the international colloquium on 'Tumours of the thyroid gland' in Marseilles 1964 and brought up to date by the authors. Most of the best known authorities of the western world on the subject have taken part, and papers with opposing views have been paired deliberately whenever possible in order to animate the discussion.

The tumours are discussed from virtually every aspect and a comprehensive picture of our present knowledge emerges from the well balanced presentation. Among the more interesting problems considered are the lateral aberrant thyroid, the plurifocality of papillary carcinoma, the hormonal dependency of carcinoma of the thyroid, the indications for lobectomy of the thyroid, radical and suprарadical thyroidectomy, cervical dissection and operative techniques. Such complications as paresis of the recurrent nerve, and hypoparathyroidism find due place. Large series are presented by experienced surgeons.

A uniform clinical and pathologic classification is proposed by P. Denoix and R. Gerard-Marchand of Villejuif.

The usefulness of  $^{131}\text{I}$  in the diagnosis and treatment of carcinoma of the thyroid and metastases is discussed in great detail.

A fixed relationship between chronic thyroiditis and thyroid carcinoma has been established in a series of 436 patients by Hirabayashi & Linsay, San Francisco, who regarded chronic thyroiditis as a precancerous condition.

The results of treatment (surgery, hormones, radiotherapy) are presented in a large, well-documented series, and etiologic factors such as heredity, hormones, ionizing radiation are discussed and evaluated. Certain interesting new diagnostic tools such as histophotometry and studies of the secretory activity of carcinoma of the thyroid are described.

The numerous excellent illustrations and the comprehensive bibliography add to the usefulness of the volume, which can be warmly recommended to all interested in problems connected with carcinoma of the thyroid.

*B. Jereb*

PROGNOSTIC FACTORS IN BREAST CANCER. Proceedings of First Tenvous Symposium, Cardiff 12—14 April 1967. Edited by A. P. M. Forrest and P. B. Kunkler. 481 pages, 163 figures and 148 tables. E. & S. Livingstone, Edinburgh and London 1968. Price: 70 shillings.

The some 40 papers forming this book were presented at an international symposium attended by about a hundred specialists from different research centres. Both those engaged in practical work with this type of malignant disease and those interested in the problem

theoretically should find the book of great value. It is well edited, and although many different aspects are treated, it is concentrated. The carefully assembled reference lists help the reader to obtain a good survey of the current literature in the different fields of research without loss of time.

The significance of well-known etiologic factors such as fertility, pregnancy, number of children, and breast feeding is discussed, and attention is also drawn to the variation in the natural course of the disease in untreated patients and in different forms of mammary carcinoma. The new epidemiologic investigations that have demonstrated the hitherto little known part played by dietetic factors in the occurrence of the condition are of particular interest. Tissue culture and clinical studies have also been undertaken to find out which form of hormone therapy is the most effective and which types of tumour respond to hormone treatment. Determination of androgen excretion in the urine and measurement of cortisol and of growth hormone in serum, especially in connection with glucose and insulin loading, have proved valuable. Direct measurement of hormones in blood serum with the aid of radio-immunity methods is being increasingly used in this field and has already resulted in considerable improvements in our knowledge of the connection between cancer and hormones.

The importance, as well as the difficulty, of teaching women to examine their breasts regularly, and the value of health controls, with palpation and mammography, have received fresh emphasis in new investigations. It was realized earlier that the detection of small primary malignant nodules can improve the results of treatment; but the main problem in this connection lies in the personal and economic stakes involved.

On the subject of tumour biology, the significance of growth rate and growth pattern in different types of carcinoma is emphasized. Several investigators have demonstrated the value of histologic 'grading' and clinical 'staging' in the treatment of the disease and in the assessment and comparison of different treatment results. Operation of the primary growth is widely recommended for the management of operable cases; the value of exeresis axillae and postoperative irradiation as a measure for prolonging the survival time is however also discussed. Different opinions are expressed regarding the value of prophylactic and curative hormone therapy and endocrinic surgery. Attention is also paid to immunity factors and to the problem of whether they are influenced by surgery, irradiation, hormones, or cytostatic drugs.

The book offers lucid information on the varied problems connected with mammary carcinoma and can be recommended to those interested in its diagnosis and treatment.

*Gustaf Notter*

**MALIGNANT TUMOURS OF THE THYROID GLAND.** By E. Beregi, R. Jankovics and Z. Brasch. 81 pages, 50 figures and 13 tables. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1967. Price: 6 dollars.

The authors discuss the incidence, diagnosis, factors influencing the development, pathology, prognosis and treatment of malignant tumours of the thyroid in six chapters. The peculiar biologic behaviour of carcinoma of the thyroid and the difficulties in the differential diagnosis between malignant and benign thyroid tumours are described. The authors' own histologic classification is presented. The material consists of 128 malignant thyroid tumours (out of 14 122 strumectomies), 47 of which were lost to follow-up. The influence of the age of the patient on the prognosis is stressed.

The book is not easy to read, perhaps because the material and the discussion both seem to be somewhat disjointed. Quite a few conclusions are conjectural and certain obvious facts are unduly emphasized. The translation is often awkward with the result that the meaning is not always clear. The book is nicely produced.

*B. Jereb*

**CLINICAL AND RADIOBIOLOGICAL PROPERTIES OF MELANOBLASTOMA.** By I. Rodé. 302 pages, 160 figures, 27 tables. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1968. Price: 14.70 dollars.

The author, a clinical radiologist with twenty years clinical experience of this tumour, presents a material of 600 cases of melanoblastoma in different parts of the human body, the most frequent localization being the skin. Melanoblastomas occurred between the fourth and sixth decade in 63 per cent of the cases. The author believes that specific developments, pathologic, cytologic, biochemical and endocrinologic aspects of melanoblastomas raise particular biologic and oncologic questions.

The book is divided into a general and a special part. The general part discusses the nature and the physiologic and pathologic roles of melanin, as well as experimental tumours in animals, and considers the clinical aspects of spontaneous melanuria. The special part deals with melanoblastomas of the skin both from the view of general individual properties, treatment and prognosis. One chapter of this is devoted to problems arising in melanoblastomas of the eye and the central nervous system as well as in melanoblastomas lying in the genitalia, digestive tract, oral and pharyngeal cavities, and other regions.

A good bibliography is included at the end of the book and may encourage further study of this important tumour.

*Folke Edsmyr*

**RADIUM DOSAGE. THE MANCHESTER SYSTEM.** Second edition. Edited by W. J. Meredith. 132 pages, 38 figures, 4 plates, 21 tables, 2 appendices with tables. Livingstone, London 1967. Price: 42 shillings.

The revised edition of this well known work is again in two parts. Part I gives the basic rules and dose calculation methods of the 'Manchester System' for radium and radon treatments, originally developed by Paterson and Parker, in a practical and useful manner. A number of worked-out examples for the main types of treatment (moulds of various types, line sources and implants) are included and the Manchester system of treatment of carcinoma of the cervix is also described. This part contains everything needed in the daily work. The numerical tables for the calculations are printed at the end of the book on fold-out sheets which may easily be consulted while the text pages are perused.

Part II deals with the scientific foundations of the methods. It consists of essentially unchanged reprints of a number of papers of several authors over the period 1934—1953 in which the physics of the system are developed, the basic formulas are derived and the suitability of the rules given in part I are proved. This method of presentation entails some formal inconsistencies, such as the use in the earlier papers of the term 'intensity' and later 'dosage rate' for the quantity now known as 'exposure rate'. This should however cause little serious confusion to the attentive reader.

Part II also contains a useful chapter on radiography for checking the needle positions in implants, and a concluding chapter on 'A new unit and some new sources' that explains the conversion of exposure in R to dose in rad, and on dosage calculations for certain artificial gamma emitters. An appendix indicates how calculations may be made in situations not covered by the planar mould or line source tables.

This new edition will be heartily welcomed in the many radiotherapy centres all over the world where the Manchester system is in use. The book is however also recommended to radiotherapists and physicists who do not employ it. Familiarity with such an extensively used system is valuable for comparison with others and for judging their relative merits. The general approach is also well worth studying. Many of the numerical data and the information in the chapters on radiography position control as well as on the new unit and new sources may be more or less directly applied to other systems.

*Sven Benner*

**RADIOATOMS IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE.** By P. H. Blichert-Toft. 78 pages, 47 figures. Gothenburg Press, Värmånadsgatan 5 B, Göteborg 1968. Price: Sw Kr 25.

This monograph presents decay schemes, radiation types and energies for a number of medically interesting radionuclides. A few omissions, e.g.  $^{58}\text{Co}$  and  $^{133}\text{Xe}$ , and above all the iodines, will, it is hoped, be included in a second edition. The material is based on a critical survey and selection from the large amount of data in the literature. The many papers used have not been quoted explicitly but appear under the reference codes of the Nuclear Data Group of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. This has saved space although readers wanting to consult the original papers and without the group publications at hand may find this somewhat inconvenient.

Many radiologic physicists will welcome the collection of all these data in a handy little volume instead of having to search for them in the extensive literature or in bulkier handbooks when wanting to perform dosage calculations, designing protection screens etc. Many radiologists may, however, be unable to gain the utmost from the book because of insufficient background in nuclear physics.

*Sven Benner*