

a lasting interest in biochemistry. Nowadays, writers of preclinical text-books ought surely to ask themselves all the time what can be left out rather than what can be put in, and whether the information can be presented to the student in a more vivid and more intelligible way by omitting details and unessential facts.

It should be emphasized that these criticisms apply mainly to the book as a text-book for medical students, though that, after all, is its declared purpose. As a book for science students with more time for biochemistry, it is in many ways excellent. The biochemical reactions and metabolic cycles are well set out in the figures, there are numerous cross-references, and important topics such as enzyme action and metabolic antagonism are discussed clearly and illustrated by helpful diagrams. There are a good many minor slips and misprints; but these are perhaps excusable in the first edition of a book containing so much detail. Science students and their teachers will find this a useful, original and up-to-date text-book. It should find a place beside its well-known companion volume, "Clinical Biochemistry", by Cantarow and Trumper, which incidentally managed to cover its ground without using any chemical formulæ more elaborate than that of carbonic acid.

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A PHILOSOPHICAL TREASURE-HUNT

Treasury of Philosophy

Edited by Dagobert D. Runes. Pp. xxiv + 1280. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955.) 15 dollars.

THIS volume is another of the huge compilations so much in favour in the United States. It contains extracts, prefaced by brief introductions, from the works of nearly four hundred writers; they range from Anaximander to Sartre, from Chuang Chu to Johann Comenius. There are excerpts from the works of Oriental philosophers and theologians, medieval Hebrew writers and the Arab commentators on Aristotle. Some of this material is, we are told, here made available in English for the first time, though the translators are frequently not named. It is valuable to have some indication of the views of the less well known of these thinkers. The editor observes with some justice that American philosophers are too much neglected in European surveys of the subject, and accordingly he tries to remedy this deficiency. Unfortunately, he has included the work of unimportant people like Henry Ward Beecher and Amos Alcott, the father of Louisa May, who ramble on in the folksy 'philosophizing' vein of Will Rogers. It is very surprising that no reference whatever is made to what is probably the most remarkable American contribution to philosophy, the "Treatise on Language" by Alexander Bryan Johnson, published in 1836.

The book as a whole is vitiated by two serious deficiencies. There is no principle of selection; in fact, Dr. Runes admits that he has no clearer conception of philosophy than that it is "the search for the undefinable", and he asserts that the only thing common to the contributors is that they have at some time "sat down to meditate upon the wondrous themata that came to their minds in uncharted realms". It is scarcely surprising that such a wide-meshed net has failed to keep out writers like Walt

Whitman, Charles Lamb and Maurice Maeterlinck. The second shortcoming is a consequence of the huge scale of the anthology, which is so ambitious as to be self-defeating. The extracts are perforce so brief that many are scarcely intelligible. For this reason, considerations of price apart, the book cannot be recommended as an introduction to the subject, while anyone with some acquaintance with philosophy will probably find reading it a depressing experience; it is like walking around a dissecting-room scattered with the disjointed members of one's friends.

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A TEXT-BOOK OF EMBRYOLOGY

Developmental Anatomy

A Textbook and Laboratory Manual of Embryology. By Dr. Leslie Brainerd Arey. Sixth edition. Pp. xi + 680. (Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1954.) 47s. 6d.

THE present volume has been extensively revised in the light of recent developments in embryology. In addition, the material in the book has also been rearranged so that there are now twenty-eight chapters instead of twenty-three. The aim of the author has been to subdivide larger chapters of earlier editions of the book "into shorter and friendlier units". In this aim he has succeeded. A consistent policy throughout the book has been to use larger type for "basic information" and smaller type for so-called "supplementary information". It is debatable whether this approach is desirable in a text-book which is essentially for students. The average student is in doubt as to whether or not to leave out the supplementary material.

The book is divided into three main parts.

Part 1 deals with general development and includes chapters on fundamental concepts, reproductive physiology, placentation and experimental embryology and teratology. Part 2 is essentially devoted to organogeny, and Part 3 is in the form of a laboratory manual.

The experimental approach to the pertinent developmental mechanics is admirably dealt with as a separate entity in a chapter on experimental embryology. Details concerning developmental mechanics of different organs are also discussed in a brief summary under the heading of "Causal Relations" in the appropriate chapter. In most instances this discussion is useful and valuable, but in others it is much too brief.

Part 3 of the book is in the form of a laboratory manual and deals with the embryology of the chick in the earlier stages of development and also with the anatomy of the 10-mm. pig embryo. The embryology of the chick is undoubtedly of value in the details which it gives to the student of biology; for the medical student it is much too detailed. One would have preferred to have had the anatomy of the 5- and 10-mm. human embryos given, instead of that of the pig. This section and, indeed, other chapters in the book should have photographs of sections of embryos rather than semi-schematic drawings.

The revision of the book has been carefully carried out. The author must be congratulated in producing a readable book of reasonable dimensions in a subject which is rapidly expanding. The publishers must also be congratulated on the excellence of the reproduction and the general format of the book.

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