

REVIEW OF BOOK

The Larynx and its Diseases. By CHEVALIER JACKSON and CHEVALIER L. JACKSON. W. B. Saunders & Co., Philadelphia, price 35s.

Diseases of the larynx do not appear to have hitherto been considered of sufficient importance to deserve a text book devoted to them alone, and it is the endeavour of the authors to supply this want that has resulted in this monograph.

Many years ago the elder Jackson included a section on laryngeal disease in one of his text books and this naturally forms the basis of the present book. In the interval a vast amount of clinical material has been accumulated and from this typical cases illustrating the various aspects of laryngeal disease have been selected. The book is profusely illustrated with Jackson's well-known water colour sketches which are of the utmost value in bringing to one's notice the varied clinical picture that may be presented by the same disease. The sketches are particularly useful in the case of "contact ulcer" to which attention was first drawn by Jackson in 1928. No less than sixteen sketches of actual cases are presented and, whilst many show the typical boss on the vocal process of one side and the typical cup on the vocal process of the other, some present quite a different appearance though the lesions are still in the situation that is so characteristic of the disease. The sketches serve also to bring out the soft granulomatous appearance of the contact ulcer as opposed to the hard white appearance which is seen in pachydermia, a condition that is sometimes confused with it, though, as the authors point out, in contact ulcer there is ulceration but no pachydermia, whilst in the latter there is pachydermia but no ulceration. The subject of pachydermia naturally turns one's mind to other horny swellings that are occasionally seen on various parts of the vocal cords and which have so many times given rise to doubt in the observer's mind and one wonders what the authors think of keratosis and leukoplakia, and the possibility of the latter, or of either, being a precancerous condition. Here again good illustrations reinforce the authors' view that keratosis, though it may recur after removal, is never followed by carcinoma, whilst leukoplakia is not uncommonly a precursor of that disease.

Naturally the question of malignant disease receives full consideration and a chapter is devoted to the clinical aspect whilst another chapter is given up to the operative treatment. In discussing the differential diagnosis the fact that cancer of the vocal cord almost invariably originates in the anterior part of the larynx

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does not seem to be mentioned. The technique of laryngofissure, invariably performed under local anæsthesia and without a tracheotomy, is given in great detail and many of the authors' technical devices for overcoming difficulties are described and illustrated.

The use of radium as an alternative to surgical removal is dismissed in a few lines with scanty reference to technique and no mention whatever of dosage or filtration, whilst the use of X-rays for intrinsic carcinoma is not referred to, although one gathers that satisfactory results have been obtained in epilaryngeal cases by following the Coutard technique.

In the section on endolaryngeal operations it is a little surprising to see that the operation of ventriculo chordectomy is still advocated for the relief of bilateral abductor paralysis. The reviewer's experience is that a fresh fibrous cord almost invariably forms at the site of the operation and it would be interesting to have had further details of the results some years after operation.

The treatment of stenosis of the larynx receives very full consideration. The authors appear to have given up external operations such as Schmiegelows and laryngostomy with rubber tube dilatation in favour of their own method of intralaryngeal dilatation by means of elastic rubber core moulds which they find most satisfactory. Laryngo-tracheostomy with subsequent skin grafting, which is so successful in difficult cases is not referred to.

No one can fail to be impressed with the enormous amount of thought and care that has been expended on this volume and of the wealth of clinical material on which it is based. It is certainly a book to which every laryngologist will want constantly to refer.

WALTER HOWARTH.