

Book Reviews

Cancer in Pregnancy. Larry McGowan. I. Newton Kugelmass (ed.). Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, 1967. 142 pp. \$7.50.

Cancer in pregnancy is one of the most tragic problems a man can encounter in medicine. The patient is youthful, and the time ought to be one of joy and hope. Her husband and her family are overwhelmed with fear. And over a little child a shadow of fate that all our sensibilities tell us should not fall until the afternoon and evening of life has come already at its dawning.

The weights of all these troubles come down on the physician not only as a man of medicine but as a man of his people as well. Certainly the decision for abortion has often been urged with the unexpressed thought that the child's sad future and the suffering of a young father faced with the constant reminder of the loss of his wife and the innumerable problems of providing for an infant in a motherless home are past bearing. These problems, rather than special pathophysiological complexities, constitute the problem of cancer in pregnancy.

In modern times, whatever surgery is advisable for the nonpregnant woman is manageable for the pregnant. Radiotherapy not directly focused on the uterus itself does no harm. Chemotherapy begun after organogenesis is complete has not interfered with intrauterine development sufficiently to prevent the delivery of children normal by all available standards of clinical and laboratory examination.

Dr. McGowan has drawn together a series of short chapters about cancer of the various organ systems complicated by pregnancy. His focus is on the newly discovered, surgically or radiotherapeutically treatable, primary neoplasm appearing in the pregnant woman. The manner of presentation is discursive prose. Tables and graphs are not used. The information is drawn from reviews of the literature. The citations are not intended to be comprehensive. They are not critically evaluated. This leaves open the question whether the literature reviews upon which the author based his chapters are representative. Since he has not related his conclusions from the literature to an extensive and well-analyzed personal or institutional experience, nothing new is added either in terms of data or interpretive judgment.

As a ready reference guide into the clinical literature of the subject, the book may be of use to obstetricians and surgeons and for hospital libraries.

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Specific Tumor Antigens. UICC Monograph Series, Vol. 2. A symposium organized by the International Union Against Cancer and the U.S.S.R. Academy of Medical Sciences. R. J.

C. Harris (ed.). Flushing, New York: Medical Examination Publishing Company, Inc., 1967. 366 pp. \$22.

This volume is a record of the symposium which was held in Sukhumi, U.S.S.R., in May 1965. It brings together a good cross section of what is known about antigens which are present in various tumors and the specificity of the antibodies produced against them. Antigenic analyses of tumor substances are described and discussed for various types of malignancies. Papers are presented dealing with antigens from chemically induced and viral-induced tumors and with the appearance of embryonic components in the tumors. The discussions following the presentations have been well worked out and are enlightening. The question of the meaning of tumor specificity is discussed frequently. The papers represent a true international view of the type of work going on in all parts of the world and are of particular interest as a survey of the work going on in the eastern part of Europe.

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Methods in Cancer Research. Vol. 3. Harris Busch (ed.). New York: Academic Press, 1967. 755 pp. \$33.

Since cancer research encompasses a wide variety of disciplines, it is the beneficiary of methodology from many other areas of research. Even a biochemist interested in mechanisms of drug action for studies on cancer chemotherapy has difficulty keeping abreast of the rapidly developing methods available in molecular biology. This third volume of *Methods in Cancer Research* deals with the methods available from molecular biology. Chapters are included on the nucleic acids and nucleoproteins, their isolation and fractionation, and on enzymes concerned in their synthesis or degradation. In many instances there is sufficient detail to permit direct use of the methods. Good coverage of the original literature is provided, and critical comments are included concerning alternative methods. A section on sources of antitumor agents includes a chapter on the design and synthesis of anticancer drugs and one on natural products. The former paints a somewhat pessimistic picture.

This volume contains the type of material that would lead many investigators to want it for personal use, but its price would probably limit it to availability in libraries.

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Macromolecular Synthesis and Growth. Ronald A. Malt (ed.). Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967. 251 pp. \$10.

A series of seven superb brief accounts of progress in some of the major areas of molecular and cell biology appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 1967. These have