

previous chapter headings which include topics on the scope of bacteriology, occurrence and taxonomy, general properties, microscopy, dyes and staining, structure, surface properties, growth, enzymes, physical factors, nutrition, genetics, metabolism, and chemical disinfection. Carefully selected new material has been incorporated in all chapters without marring their original integrity and unity; easily recognized additions were numerical taxonomy, fimbriae, the report of the international commission on enzymes, the control of enzyme synthesis, nutrition and ecology, the mapping and expression of genes and chromosomes, carbohydrate metabolism, and stereoisomerism in biology. The chapters on enzymes, genetics, and metabolism have been greatly enlarged. The chapter on dyes and staining retains its primary status among those found in textbooks on the field.

Among the mechanical features that I appreciated are the quality of the

paper, the improved and detailed table of contents with the larger print used for the page number of each chapter, subdivision of the references into convenient subjects following each chapter, and the exhaustive index.

Despite the overall excellence of the volume, I must comment on two negative aspects. The chapter on metabolism remains disproportionately long and leaves a somewhat cluttered impression owing to the detailed and complex information presented; the high costs of modern publication must account for the failure to add any significant new illustrations or tables.

Lamanna and Mallette's *Basic Bacteriology* will forever hold its unique position as a satisfying first textbook for the serious student, and as an idea-stimulating reference source.

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The Social Responsibility of Gynecology and Obstetrics

In this era of malignant tensions between ideologies, nations, and ethnic groups, and between man and his environment, tensions so great that the stress they engender threatens humanity with adrenal insufficiency, any contribution focused on lessening tension is a laudable effort. This report of the Hopkins symposium, **The Social Responsibility of Gynecology and Obstetrics** (Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Md., 1965. 224 pp., \$5.95), edited by Allan C. Barnes, considers a female's tensions with her own sexual and reproductive capacities and in what ways empathetic, knowledgeable medical care may lessen these tensions.

The title of this volume brings in focus a topic long blurred. It is platitudinous to state that American gynecologists have a superior ability to prevent and treat physical ailments; it is less platitudinous to state that they are highly deficient in the ability needed to prevent and treat the social pathology that stems from the sexual and reproductive capacities of the female. Furthermore, American medicine has been less than outstanding in furnishing sociomedical leadership and in molding the attitudes of physicians. One is reminded of this daily. At noon yesterday, I lunched with a group of gynecological residents at a hospital

where I had given guest rounds. Conversation turned to the problem of global population. The grim realities of world hunger, illiteracy, and poverty were strongly stated. Yet two of the several young doctors who strongly endorsed birth control based their enthusiasm almost wholly on its potential for reducing welfare rolls, diminishing the tax burden, and preventing overbreeding by inferior stock. They felt no responsibility toward feeding less affluent nations. That effective contraception might help reduce acute and chronic stress at the individual and family level had escaped them.

The volume reviewed has a loose structure held together by two straps—all the papers were presented at a one-day symposium held under theegis of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Johns Hopkins University and each deals with courses of sexual and family stress and techniques to reduce them.

Allan Barnes, an eminent, thoughtful professor of obstetrics and gynecology, artfully weaves the volume into a single cloth with a prologue, epilogue, and a philosophic link between disparate sections on the population explosion, the concept of fetal excellence, the control of neoplasia, the law (in relation to functions of the female reproductive

tract), agencies (social), and the individual (patient and physician). One wishes that some of the less germane material, such as neoplasia, had been omitted and that more pertinent topics, such as the social obstacles delaying the obstetrician-gynecologist from assuming an intelligent, liberal leadership role in social problems of his art, had been expanded. The contributors and assuredly the editor, are thoughtful liberals ahead of their time.

In commenting on the civil rights of the fetus, Barnes writes: "Have you and I the right to condemn him to be born to dirt and squalor, into a family which does not want him, cannot afford him, and will totally neglect him? Have we the right to force the anomalous to be born, even when his defect can be diagnosed months before term? Must we await the miraculous appearance of a neonatal Thomas Jefferson, or is it part of our social responsibility to compose a new Bill of Rights?"

Carl Taylor writes: "My major thesis is that doctors are not now adequately fulfilling their role in educating their patients about contraception. . . . As with other social implications of our professional responsibility we [the medical profession] should lead, not follow, the important social movements of our time."

Leon Eisenberg writes: "With man, self-consciousness has been added to the laws of biology. It is within man's grasp to foresee the consequences of his multiplication, to consider quality as a greater good than quantity, and to reorder his behaviour before the cataclysm. Whether man will, rests upon just such efforts as ours in this conference."

There is much in the volume that involves the social scientist as deeply as the obstetrician-gynecologist. Barnes writes: "We have artificially constructed a society in which to be married is 'a good thing' and 'divorce is a bad thing,' although there is not a shred of scientific evidence to support either of these contentions. The pressures on our young people toward marriage are greater than any pressure they may feel to contribute significantly to the progress of our society."

This volume presents strong thinking and good writing. It is too bad that no one selected the audience before whom these papers were delivered.

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