

BOOK REVIEW

THE ANATOMY OF THE FEMALE PELVIS by C. F. V. SMOUT, with sections on The Histology of the Female Reproductive Tract, and a chapter on Ovarian Endocrine Function by F. Jacoby. Foreword by Sir Beckwith Whitehouse. Edward Arnold and Company, London, July 1943, 0/35/0 net.

The assembling of the fundamentals of the anatomy and physiology of the female pelvis into a well illustrated compact volume will be welcomed by all medical students. In so doing Professor Smout has rendered a service to the pedagogy of Gynecology and Obstetrics. That it was done under the stress of war will make this volume all the more appreciated. One can not but praise the wisdom of the British Government, in these days of priorities, for permitting its publication, in color.

Professor Smout, assisted by his able collaborator Doctor Jacoby, has produced a concise and amply illustrated book with 170 figures, in the compact limit of 190 pages. Artist Pardoe shows promise in anatomical illustration. His figures are simple but show depth, a valuable aid in fixing a forgotten subject in the mind at a glance. The book is intended primarily as a refresher for the medical student just entering upon the study of Gynecology and Obstetrics. But the midwife should find this volume more than profitable reading, she might even consider it essential.

Each chapter, on the viscera, includes a brief but adequately illustrated section on development. Chapters I, II, and III, on Bones and Joints, have 42 illustrations in 29 pages. The text points out the significance of the anatomy as it occurs. The treatment of chapter I, Bones of the Pelvis, is admirable, but the space given to a comparison of male and female pelvises were better utilized elsewhere, in so brief a treatise; for the male pelvis is of little moment here, and could be handled in a short paragraph.

Chapters IV and V, The Walls of the Pelvis and Pelvic Fascia, seem to be the least ably handled in the book, especially the fascia. It is to be regretted that such a finely planned volume should be deficient in so important a phase of pelvic anatomy. Perhaps the author thought a more adequate discussion was beyond the scope of the book. The reviewer would suggest that the space above indicated

as superfluous, in the chapter on Bones, be used in amplifying the chapter on fascia. In these same chapters occur figures which will mislead the student. Numbers 43 and 51 give unreal ideas of the pelvic floor, while figure 52 confirms the text in confusing Arcus Tendineus Fasciae Pelvis with Arcus Tendineus M. Levatoris Ani (BNA).

The Ovary and its Histology comprise chapter VI. Twelve of the 15 sections illustrated are of excellent human material. They span the years from prepubertal to premenopausal time and include both gravid and non-gravid sections. The discussion is adequate. It is fitting, at this time, that endocrine functions should be reviewed so thoroughly, for the gynecologist needs to be hormone conscious, and the time allotted to this subject in many physiological laboratories is minimal. To this might be added a short appreciation of the importance of psychical degeneration following bilateral oophorectomy in the absence of adequate substitution therapy, especially in younger women.

An excellent Chapter VIII, on the Uterine Tube and on Ovulation, follows. Here, a short discussion of tubal and other ectopic conditions would enhance the reader's perspective. Chapter IX, The Uterus and Vagina, is one of the best in the book. Figure 120, a cervicovaginal section, and the text which applies to it, may be studied with profit by all beginning gynecologists. It shows the overlapping zone between columnar and squamous epithelia. The implications are discussed. The next chapter treats of the important relations of the Genitourinary and Alimentary Tracts. This is followed by a chapter on the External Genitalia. Both are adequately figured and discussed.

Chapter XII, The Perineum is especially good. Illustrations 144, 145, 146, 147, and 148 form a series which might well serve as a pedagogical model for the review of any anatomical region. Figure 149, veins of the sacral vertebral canal, is timely in view of the recent advances in caudal anesthesia.

Chapter XIII, the Pelvic Lymphatic System, is well treated descriptively. It would be rendered more useful if illustrations of special regions were added. A short discussion of the physiology of the lymphatics as made out by Webb and his colleagues would not be amiss, for the factors brought out by them may yet prove to be significant in the dissemination of carcinoma.

Chapter XIV, The Innervation of the Pelvic Viscera should be the most enlightening chapter of all for the preclinical student. It is a discussion of the gross physiology of the pelvic organs. In an age in which stress is laid on microchemical researches from specialized laboratories, to the exclusion of much gross physiology, the student often approaches his clinical studies with little knowledge of many

aspects of physiology. This chapter is an excellent pioneering venture in teaching. A less diagrammatic rendering of figure 151, the innervation of the pelvic viscera, would have improved this section.

Chapter XV, considers the usual facts of Placental Formation. Among several figures, numbers 160, 161, fetal and maternal aspects of the placenta are excellent. But figure 153, a schema of placenta circulation, leaves much to be desired. Figures 162, 163, 164, and 165, types of placental vessels, and 166, a section of the umbilical cord deserve careful study by any student. The last chapter, XVI, on Fetal Circulation, has a convincing photograph of the great vessels of a full term fetus. This figure emphasizes the spatial relations of the ductus arteriosus and its significance in postnatal changes. In this connection mention might well be made of the gross anatomical studies of Noback and Rehman. Great discrepancies in the literature exist concerning this structure, and its physiology is of significance to the obstetrician as well as to the internist.

A more comprehensive index will increase the usefulness of this volume. One might wish that in such a recent publication the BNA might have been adhered to, at least in parenthesis, for colloquial terminology limits in a small way the handiness of this very useful book. At least this is true for the Canadian and the American medical student. Certain figures, 43, 48, 51, 57, 88, and 151, might be rendered with greater accuracy of detail, since they cover areas important enough to warrant less diagrammatic treatment. In addition the following changes are suggested for future editions: more sections both coronal and transverse; better treatment of the suspensory ligament of the ovary and its contents; additional and improved figures of the arterial and venous blood supply of the uterus, tube, ovary and vagina; and a reminder to the student of the necessity of checking the cervix at menopause for carcinoma.

In conclusion it is hoped that differences of emphasis by the reviewer, are in no way to be interpreted as detracting from the value of this excellent compact work. It stands as a helpful volume for all about to enter upon a study of the anatomy and gross physiology of the pelvis. In pioneering this difficult field of anatomical pedagogy, Professor Smout, his collaborator Doctor Jacoby, and their illustrator, Mr. Pardoe, deserve well earned praise. We need other concise illustrated small volumes of specific anatomical regions, with the gross physiological implications emphasized.

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