

BOOK REVIEW :

Fundamentals of Neurophysiology edited by Robert F. Schmidt Springer - Verlag, New York, Heideberg, Berlin, 1976, pp. 293, Price 29 D.M.

This is an excellent text book on neurophysiology, translated from the original German edition published in December 1974 and provides an overall review of neurophysiology in a systematized manner without encumbering the reader with superfluous details.

The editor of the book, Dr. R.F. Schmidt is well-known for his original contributions in the field of neurosciences. He has himself written almost half of the book which includes chapters on 'the structure of the nervous system', 'synaptic transmission', 'physiology of groups of neurones and reflexes', and 'motor systems'. The rest of the chapters are written by other authors who again are well known researchers in their respective fields, such as Huxley on excitation of nerve and muscle, and physiology of muscle, Zimmerman on the 'sensory systems' and Janig on 'the automatic nervous system'.

In general, the multiauthored books have often suffered from a lack of uniformity in style. This book is an exception for each contributor seems to have rigorously stuck to the guidelines given by the Editor R.F. Schmidt or perhaps the editor had to do the pruning and re-writing jobs. Whatever may have been, the end-result is something which every editor would be envious of and which every teacher would love to rely on for delivering his courses to the students.

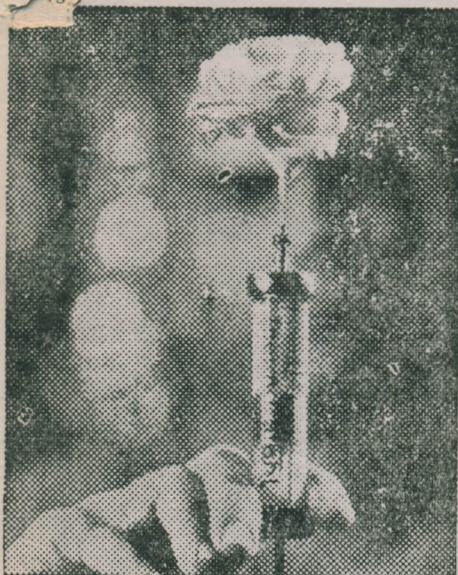
Since the book has emanated from the well-tested and programmed courses, it also follows a format which will be extremely useful to the teachers as well as students for at the end of each few pages there is a set of multiple choice questions which on the one hand will aid the student in self-assessment, and on the other hand will make the teacher conscious of the instructional objectives of the course.

It is a profusely illustrated book giving block diagrams and schematas wherever necessary, and is not burdened by the so-called original records which are the bane of many a modern text book. Instead, the illustrations are precise and aesthetically well presented. Both, the authors and the publishers earn our compliments for being discriminative.

Compared to the other textbooks on physiology which deal with neurophysiology as a section of the total text, according to my estimate, this book covers all the definitive information in much less space and in a more readable style.

I have no hesitation in recommending its adoption as a sectional text book for graduate (B.Sc.) level medical physiology courses. My only hesitation with respect to its popularity among the Indian students is its price. Leave aside the students, even the teachers will not be able to afford 29 DM (Rs. 80/-). Nevertheless till such time as a cheaper edition can be brought out, I would recommend the book to all libraries where its readers can have an access to this precious treasure.

S.K. MANCHANDA



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