

Book Review

INFECTIOUS DISEASES – VOL2 – PARASITIC

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Infectious Diseases Volume 2 Parasitic comprises part of Dr. Cooke's new edition for "Infectious Diseases – Atlas, Cases, Text", formerly published by McGraw Hill in 2008. In this new edition, many descriptions have been rewritten with new case studies. Therefore, one hundred sixty-two pages of the parasitic in the previous book have been expanded to two hundred and sixty-six pages. This seems to be the reason why the new book has to be divided into two separate parts: the non-parasitic and the parasitic. This time, Volume 2 has been published earlier than Volume 1. I was a reader of the previous edition and other teaching materials Dr. Cooke had published in the past. My first reaction after reviewing this book was "Oh, he made it even better, and he is indeed a good teacher."

Volume 2 covers protozoa, pathogenic amoebae, nematodes (filarial worms and others), trematodes (schistosomes and liver flukes) and cestodes (tape worms). However, this is neither a conventional, stereotypical textbook, nor an encyclopedia of parasitology, where the author explains all aspects of parasites in a prosaic style; which with extensive information is usually dull and unnecessary for students, who do not need a deep and broad knowledge, and who may therefore be discouraged from picking up or finishing such a book. Instead, this is a book where Dr. Cooke wisely chose an instructive form, effectively using case studies that are almost entirely based on the authors' experiences, some of his reminiscences, essays and historical facts. The layout is prudent, clean, instructive and pleasing. An introduction briefly summarizes the nature and subtypes of the organisms, followed by other paragraphs titled life cycle, epidemiology, clinical features, laboratory investigations, pathology, treatments, and preventions. All are written clearly and concisely. Trite diagrams usually inherent in parasitology textbooks are mostly omitted. The texts are itemized so that they are easy to read and understand. In the sections of clinical cases, for example, readers can deliberate on each fact presented to reach their own conclusions while reading. This is

fun, because it's just like reading a detective story. Further relevant clinical histories and/or follow ups are also added in places for conclusion. This method is likely to attract the novice who is starting to learn parasitology. What's more, columns of histories on the discovery of the diseases and organisms, as well as histories of investigators are intriguing, and provide a refreshing perspective. Pictures presented in this book are precise and illustrated with superb quality. The revival of some old photos was likely made possible with recent advances in photo technologies. All these reflect the intellectual depth, artistic sensibilities, and uniqueness of the author. Remarkable thought and prodigious effort must have gone into the making of this book.

Many people may think parasitology is outdated. Nay. In this era of close international exchange, anyone who resides not only in endemic but also in non-endemic and sanitary countries can encounter them anytime and anywhere. Medical personnel, such as laboratory technicians, nurses, scientists, and medical students, and doctors in many fields, should be aware of those diseases. This book provides introductory and essential information for them all.

In conclusion, I recommend this book to all those who work in the various medical fields as well as others who wish to have a panoramic view of parasitology. In particular, this book is evaluated as being most useful during early exposure for medical students and pathology residents. Of course, it is invaluable for experienced general pathologists as well. This is not only because of its content, but also how the content is taught. It serves as a model for excellence in teaching, that Dr. Robin A. Cooke has pursued and demonstrated over many years.

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