

## BOOK REVIEW

### "POULTRY DISEASES"

Gordon, R.F. and Jordon, F.T.W. (Editors) (1982). Second edition, English Language Book Society and Balliere Tindall, London. 401 pp.

This book is the second edition of Dr. Gordon's "Poultry Diseases", originally published in 1977. The first edition met wide acclaim for its precise account of the clinical signs, diagnosis and control of major poultry diseases. This second edition will receive similar acclaim, and can be expected to be widely used by veterinarians and others who need information on poultry diseases but who are not specialist poultry pathologists.

The book is divided into eighteen chapters, of which four (on the poultry industry in the United Kingdom, specific-pathogen-free flocks, artificial insemination, and stress and welfare) are of little relevance to workers in Papua New Guinea. Four chapters on infectious diseases of the domestic fowl comprise nearly half of the book and are the text's greatest strength. In these chapters, each disease is discussed under the headings of causative agent, epidemiology, clinical signs, post-mortem lesions, diagnosis and control. The discussion of each disease is succinct and up to date, and each entry is accompanied by a list of selected references for further reading, mainly recent reviews in the more common journals in English.

Separate chapters are devoted to neoplasms, nutritional diseases, skeletal disorders and kidney diseases, reflecting the importance of these conditions in intensive poultry husbandry. Two useful chapters concentrate on the diseases of ducks and turkeys, and another, on "miscellaneous diseases", includes several conditions which otherwise defied the

editors' attempts at classification by cause of each disease.

One chapter is devoted to methods of investigation of field problems, including collection of a detailed history and investigation of decreased productivity, hatchability, and feed quality. This chapter should be compulsory reading for all persons (veterinarians, livestock officers, managers etc.) involved in intensive poultry production in Papua New Guinea, where, fortunately, many of the most serious infectious diseases of poultry are not present and more complex multifactorial problems such as egg drops are frequently reported. It is to be hoped that this chapter will be further expanded in future editions to include more detail on the practical aspects of investigation of poultry problems and the selection and submission of specimens for laboratory examination.

A chapter is also devoted to methods of disinfection and hygiene in poultry farms and hatcheries, and quite adequately covers the principles involved. It does not, however, provide practical details of compounds, dilutions or methods of application. This is a serious omission which, for the sake of the many readers who would not have ready access to such data, ought to be corrected in future editions. Similarly, the chapter on the avian immune system provides a precise review of the development of the immune system of the domestic fowl, but does not, unfortunately, attempt to apply this by examining various recommendations for vaccination programmes.

Each chapter of the book is written by one or more specialists, and the editors have succeeded in ensuring a relatively uniform style and a minimum of repetition or overlap between contributors. The text is well written, but assumes a broad technical vocabulary which will limit its audience in this country to veterinarians and a few highly specialised poultry farm managers. The vocabulary used is far beyond that of most livestock or general extension officers, who will be better served by Departmental publications such as the "Poultry Handbook" (*Rural Development Series Handbook No. 4*, Department of Primary Industry, Port Moresby, 1976.)

For use in Papua New Guinea, this book provides an excellent review of diseases of intensive poultry, for those persons sufficiently specialised to have the vocabulary required to use the book. No information is given on more extensive husbandry and the problems seen in such systems as small-holder or village poultry production, for which far more information on practical nutrition and management is required and must be sought elsewhere. On specific diseases, more information could be provided on the control of parasitic diseases, renal forms of infectious bronchitis, mycotoxicosis, and fatty liver haemorrhagic syndrome, all of which are problems in this country but of far less importance in the United Kingdom where the book was written.

For veterinarians who are not specialists in poultry, this book provides a very useful introduction. Its value could however be greatly increased by the addition

of further details of dose rates and methods of administration of the various drugs recommended for treatment and control of specific diseases. A chapter on vaccines, including information on vaccination programmes and techniques of administration, would also be a valuable addition.

The book is well produced, with very few printing errors, and illustrated by a large number of black and white photographs and line drawings, and two colour plates, each of six photographs. Most of these illustrations are informative, but some, especially the colour plates, are too small to demonstrate lesions to anyone who is not already familiar with the condition involved. This is, presumably, a constraint imposed by the cost of larger illustrations, but detracts from the value of the book for non-specialists.

Cost constraints presumably also led to the omission of several chapters which were included in the first edition. The loss of the chapter on diseases of pet birds, pigeons and birds of prey may be missed by veterinarians, and the reviewer would have preferred the expansion of the chapter on poultry meat inspection rather than its omission. But these are minor criticisms, and do not detract greatly from the value of this book for all who require a concise and up to date review of poultry diseases.

M.J. NUNN,  
Chief Veterinary Research Officer,  
Kilakila Veterinary Laboratory,  
Port Moresby.