

BOOK REVIEW

Introduction to Biostatistics by Huldah Bancroft, Ph.D., Professor of Biostatistics, Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans. New York: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., 1957, 210 pp. \$5.75.

The teaching of biostatistics as applied to medicine is now included in the curriculum of leading medical schools. This is one of many signs that medical education itself is on the move. To maintain a useful place in this dynamic environment, courses in biostatistics must be flexible, varying with time and place and especially with the scholastic background of the students. Regardless of these variations, however, the scope and method of presentation should always be so designed as to demonstrate succinctly the essential role of the subject in medical research.

Professor Bancroft has drawn on her long experience at the Western Reserve School of Medicine and at Tulane to produce a textbook of broad usefulness. It demands no knowledge of mathematics beyond high school algebra to enable one to grasp the principles involved. From collection, classification, tabulation, and graphing of data it guides the student through the pitfalls of sampling to the chi square test, correlation coefficient and other measures of association. The subject of vital statistics is not neglected. The final chapter is concerned with problems arising in the bioassay of drugs and other substances.

Professor Bancroft has participated in the analysis of the records of the U.S.P.H.S. hospital at Carville, La. (National Leprosarium), and of those of the field studies carried out by the Leonard Wood Memorial and the Philippine Department of Health. To illustrate the technique of the modified life table it is not surprising, therefore, to find Erickson's data on relapse in patients treated with promin. Leprologists will find many other methods which are applicable to their problems.

The book is clearly printed on good paper, has 44 principal tables and 37 figures, and a set of exercises at the end of each of the 18 chapters. It can be highly recommended.

—JAMES A. DOULL