

I would like to correct an error in the strength of formaldehyde used, which has been brought to my notice.

The strength of solution used should be 20 per cent. and not 40 per cent. as printed. Though the 40 per cent. strength was used by me originally with no local untoward reaction, I found it irritant to the eyes and nose of the person applying it. The 20 per cent. strength was equally effective to the feet without the unpleasant irritant effects to nose and eyes, and a more suitable solution for use by both medical orderlies or by patients themselves.

I am, etc.

D. HOOKER.

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Book Reviews

THE MEDICAL ANNUAL 1955. By Sir Henry Tidy, K.B.E., & R. Milnes Walker. Bristol: John Wright & Sons. 1955. Pp. 548+xliv. Plates 63. Illustrated. 32s. 6d.

It is impossible to do justice to this book in a review, since so many aspects of medicine and surgery are discussed by the eminent panel of contributors. Their authoritative opinions with references to recent and important literature are most valuable guides to the study of almost any subject one may care to choose.

The article on Epidemic Hæmorrhagic Fever by Lieut.-Colonel K. P. Brown, R.A.M.C., will be of particular interest to service medical officers. His description of this disease, new to physicians of the Western World, is masterly and his experience of it an illustration of the opportunities which may present themselves in the service. Military surgeons will find useful the sections discussing war wounds, particularly chest injuries, vascular surgery and head injuries. Summaries of the present status of many new drugs are an excellent feature.

J. P. B.

A MANUAL OF ANÆSTHETIC TECHNIQUES. By William J. Pryor, M.B., F.R.A.C.S., with a Foreword by J. H. T. Challis. Bristol: John Wright & Sons. April, 1956. Pp. 236+viii. Illustrated. 27s. 6d.

This book was written as a *vade-mecum* for junior anæsthetists to supply answers for day-to-day problems. On the whole it succeeds very well in this object and would prove a useful stand-by for the isolated and occasional anæsthetist such as may not infrequently occur in the army.

There are many inaccuracies in the text and drugs are usually called by their proprietary instead of their pharmacological names. The reader would also do well to remember that when specific doses are recommended these are probably for relatively fit or muscular patients and would have to be amended accordingly for the less muscular, *e.g.* "Injection of 2.5 mg. per stone body weight of Tubarine as an initial dose."

This is a good, handy, well bound and printed book, easily read and with an adequate index.

S. O. B.

MEDICAL HISTORY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. The Royal Naval Medical Services: Operations. Edited by J. L. S. Coulter. Vol. II. London: H.M.S.O. 1956. Pp. 543+xviii. Plates 19 and map. 57s. 6d.

The Second World War accentuated the tendency, already noted in the First, towards the disappearance of the clash of mighty fleets in decisive battle. The unspectacular, though vital, task which fell to the Royal Navy was that of keeping open the shipping lanes of the oceans for the passage of convoys of merchantmen. Against this background it is difficult to present a balanced narrative and the text of this volume tends to become a series of isolated incidents, some of which may strike the reader as trivial in relation to the outcome of a global war.

Early in the war it was decided, largely in the interests of morale, to provide a medical officer for each destroyer. This entailed finding accommodation, not only for medical staff, but also for medical stores and a sick-bay, a not inconsiderable task of internal reorganization.

Only those readers who do not appreciate the importance of firmly closed watertight doors at sea and are unfamiliar with the avidity with which the naval constructor seizes upon unoccupied space will be surprised that problems arose with regard to the collection of casualties. These difficulties, coupled with the danger of losing the entire medical potential from an unlucky hit should all the medical staff be concentrated in what appeared to be the safest part of the ship, led to a system of decentralization. At one end of the ship the medical officer established a Main Distributing Station, whilst at the other end the Senior Sick Berth Attendant established an Auxiliary Distributing Station. In addition a number of First Aid Posts were set up, each under a Sick Berth Attendant.

Some 45 pages are devoted to a daily journal of a medical officer afloat and about an equal number to lessons to be learned from it. The conclusion remains, however, that professional work occupied only a small part of the medical officer's day and the only real justification for his presence was in the interests of morale.

Much of the material dealing with medical events ashore is concerned with the Far East, where the Royal Navy suffered many grievous blows. Accounts of the brutality of the Japanese are only too painfully familiar. The Japanese medical service and, in particular, its preventive side comes in for much criticism.

It is difficult to understand why this should have deteriorated so much, for in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 it was the equal of any existing medical service.

The medical stores and equipment for Operation "Torch" arouse some interesting speculations. Each port party, although provided with 1,000 condoms, had only 200 tablets of sulphaguanidine, and one can only hope that the standards of sanitation were so exemplary as to prevent dysentery completely.

The book is full of incident and makes exciting reading, but the student of medical history with limited time at his disposal is advised to concentrate on Volume I. As in the other volumes of this series, the index gives little help to anyone requiring a ready reference and is the feature most deserving of adverse criticism.

H. R. M.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT ON STRESS, 1955. Edited by Hans Seyle and Gunnar Heuser. New York : M. D. Publications Inc. Pp. 813. Illustrated. £6 11s.

This volume has maintained the high standard of previous volumes on this subject. It is an excellent reference book to the subject and contains an up-to-date bibliography.

Commencing with a synopsis of the concept of stress and reactions associated therewith it analyses the pathways through which stress stimuli are mediated and their effect on the various systems of the body. It contains an excellent chapter on Primary Aldosteronosis. It indicates the effects of stress on adrenocortical function and gives an interesting account of psychiatric stress in infancy.

This is a book which contains much biochemistry, physiology and pathology that is new and important and should be studied by all interested in the effects of stress on the individual.

J. T. R.

Publications Received

Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon General's Office, U.S. Armed Forces Medical Library. U.S. Government Press. Pp. 1506+v. \$9.

Expert Committee on Drugs Liable to Produce Addiction. Sixth Report. W.H.O. Technical Report Series, No. 102. Pp. 21. 1s. 9d.

Psychiatry and Religion. M.D. International Symposia No. 3 New York : M.D. Publications Inc. Not priced.

THE ROYAL NORTHERN HOSPITAL, 1856-1956. By Eric C. O. Jewesbury, M.A., D.M., M.R.C.P., London : H. K. Lewis & Co. Pp. 157+xii. Illustrated. 17s. 6d.