

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Radiology in World War II.** Various Editors. Office of the Surgeon-General. Washington, D.C. Department of the Army. 1966. Pp. xlii + 1087. Illustrated. \$8.25.

This large book is divided into separate parts, one for each main geographical theatre of operation, each part being written by a separate author or group of authors. This method of compilation has led to considerable repetition, but also serves to show that certain difficulties were independent of terrain, climate, supply position and personalities. The authors are all radiologists or technicians who took part in the events they describe, and they all write very directly and candidly, including their grumbles and disappointments along with successes and achievements.

After six parts of radiology proper, there is a seventh part on radiation protection and similar problems in the production of the Atomic Bomb, its employment and its aftermath. I feel that this part might more logically have appeared in one of the volumes concerned with weapon production or Army Health. I doubt if anyone seeking this information would think of consulting this book.

A major difficulty on mobilisation of the U.S. Army is shown to have been a gross shortage of radiologists and technicians. This state was not peculiar to radiology, as the total number in any speciality in peace-time bears little relationship to the number required in war, and more especially to the number fit for and available for the fighting services overseas. The U.S. Army, like our own, found it necessary to embark on an extensive training programme. In the earliest stages the radiological courses were only of eight weeks duration, though this was later considerably extended. Their emergency trained personnel appear to have been successful in general, and a considerable number stayed in this speciality after the war.

The development and production of field apparatus is well described, and its shortcomings not glossed over. Their X-Ray sets were fairly satisfactory, in contradistinction to our own pre-war set, which was abandoned as soon as possible. In the U.S. Army as in our own, the power unit was too small.

Their exceeding elaborate and costly foreign body locating device was hardly ever used in any zone of operations, plain anteroposterior and lateral films being preferred, and this again parallels our experience.

In general, it becomes clear that radiological and radiographic success was as dependent upon ingenuity, improvisation and sheer persistence, as upon the apparatus provided. The standard achieved appears to have been surprisingly high, and maintained under very adverse conditions. Given the least opportunity, elaborate diagnostic procedures and research were embarked upon.

A military history is intended to be a training document, containing a record of experience in war which can be used as a basis for future planning. This book is rather large and discursive for this purpose, but it is authentic and contains the material required. The table of contents and the index are excellent, and enable the book to be used selectively.

There is no doubt that this book should be read by all who may be required to plan medical field operations. For the student with limited time at least Part 2 (Zone of the Interior) should be read, as this contains much of the material on planning and mobilisation. With this should be read one of the major campaigns, preferably Part 5 (Asiatic/Pacific Theatre) where climatic conditions were the most severe on X-Ray equipment. However, the sheer interest of the narrative will probably lead the reader to dip into other sections.

K. H. HARPER

**Profiles of Diseases.** A study in the Natural History of Common Diseases. JOHN FRY. Edinburgh. E & S Livingstone Ltd. 1966. Pp. viii + 176. 21s.

This book contains the concentrated experience of one of the leading general practitioners in England today. In the preface the author mentions the debt he owes to the late Professor John Ryle and his book "The Natural History of Disease"—a book which in many ways resembles his own. Both books are the result of many years of careful study of the common disease—not only from the clinical attack but also the long term effects they may have on the patient's future.

After the introductory chapters, each chapter deals separately with some common disease group (Anaemia, Hypertension, Catarrhal Children, Hay Fever, Migraine and the like). Following the statistics culled from his own practice over a fifteen-year period the author gives his own conclusions on the course and progress of the diseases—what he calls the "Profile of the disease".

The book is not easy reading—it is too concentrated for that and many pages are largely statistics. Nevertheless it repays careful study and any Army practitioner who "reads, marks, learns and inwardly digests" it, will come away a wiser man with a better understanding of the common disease processes he will meet from day to day.

It is also an example of how much can be learnt and how much our knowledge can be extended—not only by the high-powered research worker surrounded by masses of electronic equipment and computers—but also by the ordinary medical officer with no more elaborate tools than an enquiring mind, careful clinical notes, and a good card index.

C. MCNEIL  
**Surgery for Nurses.** Eleventh Edition. J. MORONEY. Edinburgh. E & S Livingstone Ltd. 1967. Pp. xii + 803. Illustrated. 45s.

This well-established surgical textbook for nurses has been revised and brought up-to-date. The chapters dealing with "Acute Circulatory Failure" and "Fluid and Electrolyte Balance" are to be recommended specially to the student nurse, for their clarity. As a reference book for the trained nurse it has great merit.

J. M. ORFORD

**Nursing Emergencies.** P. S. LONDON. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1967. Pp. x + 262. Illustrated. 30s.

Mr. London's book is a splendid addition to the nursing library. It is clear, concise and lays down authoritatively the proper roles of doctor and nurse in the management of the unfortunate victims of trauma, and of sudden overwhelming medical and surgical illness. It is hoped the title will not put off young casualty and surgical officers, who would benefit greatly by studying this book.

Chapter 8, written by Major Capperauld, R.A.M.C. is a worthy contribution to this book. It is hoped it will help to engender the "rare nurse" mentioned by him in the opening of his chapter.

It is a book that should be part of the trained nurse's personal library, as well as being found on the shelves of the hospital's medical and nursing libraries.

J. M. ORFORD

**Clinical Judgement.** ALVAN R. FEINSTEIN. Baltimore. The Williams & Wilkins Company. 1967. Pp. vii + 414. 76s. Obtainable from E & S Livingstone Ltd. Edinburgh.

The title of this book suggests cosy fireside reading replete with reminiscences from a great clinician. Nothing could be further from the truth. The author was a graduate mathematician before he took up the study of medicine and he brings to his subject an incisive and analytical mind. The author's aim is to show that clinical medicine need not be divorced from the realms of science and to this end he has called to his aid Boolean algebra, or "set" theory.

A set is a collection of objects or elements having some common defined property. It is pertinent to apply set theory to clinical medicine. For example, in the universe of rheumatic fever it is possible to divide patients into sets; sets of patients with arthritis, those with carditis and those with chorea. Sets may be disjoint, having no factors in common, or overlapping having some factors in common—such as chorea and carditis, or subordinate in which one set is totally included in a larger one, as the sub-set of severe carditis is enclosed in the set of carditis patients. The relationship of various sets can be graphically displayed by means of Venn diagrams, in which sets are represented as circles or other geometric symbols whose intersection gives rise to subsets each with its own particular properties. This arrangement can identify sub-groups for which existing nomenclature is difficult or absent. Venn diagrams can be used for many purposes in medicine. They can give much assistance in peidemiological problems, they can be used for prognosis in cancer and other diseases, for evaluations of drugs, and there are many other uses. Of particular interest is the applicability of sets and subsets in the preparation of data for computers.

The reader has to apply himself closely to the three or four pages in which the manipulations of Boolean algebra are explained, but after this the going is easier. Step by step, logically, and enlightened by numerous examples and diagrams the author compels us to see the strength of his arguments. "Judgement is difficult and experience fallacious" said Osler. Dr. Feinstein has shown that by the application of scientific method we can improve our judgement and increase the width of our experience and the ability to recall it at will.

This is a deep, wise book written with perception and insight into clinical problems. It ranges far and wide and its philosophical content will appeal to all who are deeply concerned with clinical medicine. No serious student of medicine can afford to ignore it.

R. J. MORRISON

**Myotatic Kinesthetic and Vestibular Mechanisms.** CIBA Foundation Symposium. London. J & A Churchill Ltd. Pp. xi + 331. Illustrated. 65s.

This book contains papers presented at the third Ciba Symposium on sensory function with Professor Lowenstein in the chair, and this meeting was particularly concerned with the sensory control of posture and movement. Many countries were represented by a number of authorities on their own subjects and the result is of a very high standard. The innervation and responses of mammalian skeletal muscle are described together with the spinal and cerebral pathways involved, and the anatomical connections of the vestibule together with vestibular physiology are outlined very lucidly by Professor Lowenstein himself and Professor Brodal from Oslo. The clinical aspects and application of new techniques of otoneurological diagnosis are fully explored including an assessment of electronystagmography in the localisation of neurological lesions, but the symposium were unable to agree on the value of dietic and fluid restriction in Meniere's disease. An excellent book of reference which all who are interested in this subject should read.

A. BARHAM CARTER