

## Reviews.

DICTIONARY OF MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS. By H. L. McKisack. Second Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1912. Pp. X and 590. Price 10s. 6d. net.

This book provides a description of symptoms and their significance arranged in alphabetical order. It often occurs to us in the course of practice to hear of a symptom, or series of symptoms, for which we are at a loss to provide an explanation, and a reference to a book such as this is often the thing which is needed to put us on the right track.

Another use for the book is when, in the course of our reading, we come across a reference to such and such a sign, often very inconveniently labelled with a man's name. Dr. McKisack's book provides the necessary explanation in such a case. Lastly, it is not a bad practice periodically to renew our acquaintance with the text-book descriptions of signs and symptoms; even the most experienced and the most conscientious get rusty on some points, and the perusal of such a book as this, say, once a year, would serve to refresh our memory and keep our knowledge of clinical signs fresh. We have tested the book from these points of view, and find it fulfils its purpose admirably; reference to symptoms presented by recent cases, which had necessitated considerable reflection, showed that the work would have provided the necessary guidance.

We could hardly expect that such a work would provide a guide in tropical diseases, and in this department it is decidedly weak. It is a defect that is common to books written by men without tropical experience, and, if we might offer a suggestion, it is one which might be remedied with advantage, if only to serve in some degree to reduce the number of appalling mistakes which are made even by eminent men in this country when they come to deal with patients who have returned from tropical countries. We have only to cite in this connection the prevailing idea that unexplained fever in a man who has once lived in the tropics (it may be a dozen years back) is malaria; such an idea as this leads to people dying of unopened liver abscesses, or to patients who are suffering from phthisis, being dosed with quinine for months when sanatorium treatment was really indicated.

Apart from these criticisms, if criticisms they may be called, the book can be recommended as a very useful and very readable guide to the symptomatology of disease.

W. S. H.

UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE, January, 1912.

This number contains several very interesting papers; and it may be remarked that back numbers of such magazines can generally be obtained from the circulating libraries at a small price.

Admiral Sir E. R. Fremantle writes on "The Morocco Crisis and Churchill's clean Sweep," and Lieutenant Dewar on "The Admiralty and the Autumn Crisis," both papers advocating a Naval War Staff, the creation, or evolution, of which has since been announced.

Admiral Fremantle believes the statement to be correct, that the military had their expeditionary force in readiness, but that they were suddenly confronted with a naval *non possumus*, as the Admiralty were not prepared to guarantee "safe passage" till they had dealt with the enemy's naval force, or had so located and blockaded it that there would be no danger of interference with transports, even by destroyers or submarines. He thinks that too great reliance on the supposed superiority of our Navy may have caused the military authorities to minimise the naval danger. But this want of appreciation of the naval position shows that the two services were not in touch with one another, and the necessity for a Naval War Staff. As to the latter Admiral Fremantle suggests that, "possibly Sir Arthur Wilson, a strong, self-reliant man, was reluctant to admit of any interference in what he considered to be the First Sea Lord's responsibility, and that he was supported by the other Naval Lords."

If this was their view it would afford the best explanation of a change in Naval Lords more drastic than any in recent years.

Lieutenant Dewar agrees with Admiral Fremantle as to what was probably the attitude of the Admiralty, but holds that the general staff were right in their request, that arrangements should be made for the instant transport of the military force. "Considering the topographical features of the coast and the short distance to be traversed, together with our unquestioned naval superiority, there was nothing to prevent the immediate passage of transports. The passage (it can hardly be called a voyage) would have taken place behind an easily defensible 21-mile start, commanded by naval ports on both sides. With a strong flotilla of destroyers and submarines in the Downs, and patrolling the Dutch narrows, the appearance of any battleships would have been signalled in ample time to permit transports to reach port." . . . "If the Admiralty refused to undertake this business, it must have based its refusal on one of two grounds. Either, firstly, that the enemy's fleet must be held up or destroyed before it could guarantee the safety of passage; or, secondly, that if all the regulars were despatched to France, the increased burden of coastal defence thrown on the fleet would handicap naval strategy." The first is a purely naval question; the second is one to be solved by the Cabinet or Committee of Imperial Defence, and should long ago have been tabled and hammered out by them.

These papers are followed by an important one by Lord Milner, "A Civilian View of National Service." He considers that the reasonable objections to National service may be reduced to two arguments. The first is that the geographical and other conditions of the British Empire are so exceptional, that what all other great countries have found necessary for their protection is not necessary for us. It may be put in the following form: "The command of the sea is vital alike to the maintenance of our Empire, and to the safety of these islands. As long as we retain that command military forces greater than those which we at present possess are unnecessary. If we lost that command, an army, even a great army, could not save us, for we should be cut off from our oversea possessions, and we should be liable to be starved at home." He thinks that this statement, though in a sense perfectly true, harbours a great fallacy—that the Navy alone can ensure command of the sea. We

cannot retain it by being prepared to build ships, and even more ships, to outstrip any possible rival. We may build against one nation or even against a combination, but we cannot build ships against the half of Europe. "If Western Europe, with all its ports, its harbours, its arsenals, and its resources, were to fall under the domination of a single will, no efforts of ours would be sufficient to retain command of the sea. It is the Balance of Power on the Continent which alone makes it possible for us to retain it. . . . But in order to help to maintain that balance we require an army, and no puny army. It need not be an army equal to that of one of the great military powers, but it must be an army which would weigh on the scales in a continental struggle, an army large enough to make our alliance valuable in a great land war. For that purpose all the regular troops which are at present available—the whole "Expeditionary Force"—are quite inadequate, though they would count for something." But under present conditions we should not be able to repair the wastage even of this small force for three months without a trained nation behind it. He holds that the main, if not the only cause of the prolongation of the South African war, was the fact that we so soon got to the end of our tether in respect of trained fighting men.

The second argument against National Service is that the burden which any system of general military training would involve is greater than the Nation can, in addition to other burdens, be reasonably asked to bear. In answer to this Lord Milner points out that we do not aim at military strength on the scale of Germany or France, but "we do need a nation of greatly improved physique, and of some general military training, a nation capable, under the strain of war, of developing a fighting strength three or four times as great as what we at present possess." He ventures to suggest that the first step should be taken by giving the whole of our able-bodied youth some six months' service (presumably whole-time) in the ranks of the Territorial Army, and by preparing them for that service by general cadet training at school.

"The experience of foreign countries shows that, when once a definite period of service is demanded of every man, of whatever class, within certain age limits, all social and industrial conditions adapt themselves to that requirement. . . . Whether the Territorial Army, sure of its members, and giving to its members in time of peace that substantial degree of training which is at present postponed till the outbreak of war, would be alone sufficient to fill the gap in our military organization, to give us all the additional strength that we need, is more than I am prepared to affirm, though on the other hand I must not be taken to deny it. Let us begin at any rate by erecting a genuine Territorial Army."

J. T. C.

HANDBOOK ON MILITARY SANITATION FOR REGIMENTAL OFFICERS. By Major K. B. Barnett, M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.S.I., R.A.M.C. With an Introduction by Lieutenant-General Sir Horace L. Smith-Dorrien, K.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C. London: Forster Groom & Co., Ltd. Pp. xxii. and 176. Price 2s. 6d. net.

On taking up a book on elementary hygiene, intended for the general reader, one is rather on the look out for evidence of the health faddist—extravagant laudation of the latest health craze or equally extravagant

condemnation of some not very deadly sins. Major Barnett has very successfully steered clear of these rocks. If he has skimmed rather lightly over the scientific factors in the cause and spread of infective diseases, he has included such of their practical applications as concern the regimental officer; sufficient to enable subaltern officers to pass their examination in this subject; and this is presumably the primary object of the book.

It is admittedly difficult to present technical details to non-technical readers, while maintaining strict scientific accuracy, but we think in one or two instances the author has allowed himself too wide a licence. It is, for instance, misleading to state that the micro-organisms of disease belonging both to the vegetable and animal kingdoms are spoken of collectively as *Bacteria*, and that those belonging to the animal kingdom are called *Amœba*. Diphtheria antitoxin is, of course, not obtained by inoculating a horse "with the germs of human diphtheria"; nor is small-pox vaccine ordinarily prepared by first vaccinating a calf "with human small-pox." Until recently this was thought to be impossible and though, we believe, it has been done to a limited extent in Germany, it is certainly not done in England, nor are British troops ever vaccinated with such vaccine.

The statement that in cholera and dysentery the urine is "infectious" can hardly be supported by bacteriological knowledge, since in cholera only in a few instances and in dysentery, as far as we know, never has the causal organism been isolated from the urine.

That yellow fever "is caused by the infection of the blood by a minute animal germ" is hardly yet an established fact, for the claim of Seidelin that the "yellow fever bodies," described by him and named *Paraplasma flavigenum*, are the cause still requires confirmation.

The figures given for the losses from disease in the South African war differ somewhat widely from those in the "Medical History" of the war by Lieutenant-Colonel Simpson, which may be accepted as the official data.

The numerous references to the official books of Regulations are a useful feature of the book, and a number of examination papers set in the subject (j) for the promotion of lieutenants is given at the end of the book.

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## Current Literature.

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**Yellow Fever Bulletin**, Vol. I., No. 8 (Abstract).—The editor refers to the theory of permanent endemicity as an explanation of outbreaks of yellow fever which arise without introduction from without; he quotes a letter from Dr. Liceago, of Mexico, who suggests, as an alternative explanation, that there may be animals which are susceptible to the yellow fever parasite, and that infection may be kept going in them.

A report of Stephens' contribution to the discussion on yellow fever at the British Medical Association is reproduced. Stephens points out