

Reviews.

REVIEW OF NERVE INJURIES AND THEIR TREATMENT. By Sir James Purves Stewart, K.C.M.G., C.B., F.R.C.P., and Arthur Evans, M.S., M.D.Lond., F.R.C.S. Second Edition. Published by Henry Frowde, Hodder and Stoughton. 1919. Pp. xii and 249. Price 12s. 6d. net.

This is quite the best short manual on nerve injuries and their treatment that we have seen, and the publication of this revised and enlarged second edition shows that it has been appreciated.

The conditions with which it deals have assumed great importance since the war, and now that officers and men suffering from the effects of nerve lesions are scattered all over the country in their homes instead of being segregated in special hospitals under neurologists, the general practitioner who comes in contact with the cases will find this little book most helpful both as regards prognosis and treatment.

The treatment to be adopted in the waiting period before operation, and the continued treatment after operation, are rightly emphasized.

The book is well produced and clearly and profusely illustrated. It is remarkably free from errors in printing.

As pointed out in the preface, it is the combined work of two authors, yet there is no overlapping noticeable in the different sections of the work.

On p. 24, line 5, instead of ACC < KCC it should be ACC > KCC.

The book can be very strongly recommended to students and practitioners as a simple and clear account of the present knowledge of nerve injuries and their treatment.

A MANUAL OF WAR SURGERY. By Colonel Seymour Barling and Major J. T. Morrison. London: Henry Frowde, Hodder and Stoughton. 1919. Pp. xvi and 479. Price 21s. net.

This book records the surgical experiences of what may be called the advanced base. As Sir George Makins says in his preface: "Few men are in a position to write with confidence and authority on the progress and treatment of gunshot injuries from the time of reception of the wound to the period of actual recovery and cure." In the early years of the war the interest naturally lay in the front areas, and the casualty clearing station work has had many exponents. The advanced base in France has, so far, been almost inarticulate, but in the present volume full justice is done to the admirable work which was undertaken. It must be remembered that this was the period of a patient's case in which sepsis had to be overcome; fractures, almost invariably complicated by sepsis, had to be put on the high road to consolidation with correct alignment, and with reverence, be it spoken, the failures and misjudgments of the casualty clearing station to be corrected. There was a natural tedium in work of this kind which was absent from the more lively experience of the casualty clearing station surgeon. The salutary interchange of surgeons between front and base, which was happily arranged in the later months of the war, was needed no less for increased surgical experience than for mutual understanding.

Surgical opinion has always consolidated itself on a foundation of healthy differences of opinion. And this book might consequently have been less valuable if it had appeared earlier. The ebb and flow of opinion may be profitably, and even amusingly, studied in the current medical journals during the war. But

among the various articles there will always be found some which obviously fix a landmark, and become, as it were, a focus of crystallization for a particular branch of war surgery. Cushing's article on head wounds may be taken as an instance. It is on the sure foundation of work of this kind that the authors of the articles in Colonel Barling's and Major Morrison's work have based themselves. There is no suppression of individuality, indeed, but to any one who has had an opportunity of seeing the work of a large number of advanced base hospitals, it is evident that there were at the end of the war no real differences of principle in the treatment of wounds.

It must be conceded that this work does not tell the whole story. More remains to be said by the Home bases. Final results are even now undergoing their appreciation and summing up, and until they are before us we cannot see the picture whole. But, as a valuable contribution to one stage of war wounds, we welcome the present volume.

E. M. P.

ELECTRICAL TREATMENT. By Wilfred Harris, M.D., F.R.C.P. Third edition. Cassell and Co., Ltd. Pp. 354.

As stated in the preface to this third edition, electrical treatment has been brought into greater prominence owing to the numerous war wounds which have required treatment by these methods, and this manual should be of great service to those who have to deal with the after-results of gunshot injuries, especially wounds of nerves.

Although the book is mainly directed to the application of the faradic and galvanic currents, yet a full and clear account is given of all the methods of applying electricity to the treatment of disease and injury.

A future edition would be improved by the inclusion of the method of testing by means of condenser discharges which has been found so useful in determining the extent and recording the progress of a nerve injury.

The description of the various types of electricity and the means of their production is clearly and fully given. The descriptions of the sinusoidal and high-frequency currents are particularly good. From reading the book the number of diseases amenable to electrical treatment would appear to be very large, and the author gives a very fair account and makes no extravagant claims, but states clearly the conditions in which some good results may be expected.

It is to be regretted that the author deals so shortly with war neuroses, a subject which is still largely occupying the attention of the profession.

Treatment by X-rays is only mentioned and radium treatment is excluded from the scope of the book.

The whole subject is dealt with in a most interesting way and the illustrations, which are confined to electrical apparatus, are good. The book is remarkably free from typographical errors, and is supplied with a good index.

We can strongly recommend this book to those taking up the subject of electrical treatment, and as a guide to practitioners as to the type of case suitable for this form of treatment.

A HANDBOOK OF BRITISH MOSQUITOES. By William Dickson Lang, M.A., Sc.D., Assistant attached to the Department of Entomology, London. Printed by Order of the Trustees of the British Museum, 1920.

This is a useful publication. Its intention is to "make it possible for the student to identify all the British species without much difficulty." That is well done by Dr. Lang. In language terse and unambiguous, description is made of the points of generic and specific affinity and distinction. The text-figures drawn

by Mr. E. Terzi are clear and copiously illustrative of the text. The few plates, reprinted from another British Museum publication, do not "faithfully depict the natural colours," as is there claimed for them by Austen.

Information of the principles of classification is avoided, perhaps being considered too elementary and to be obtained elsewhere. The student and dilettante, however, find difficulty in understanding the finesse of classification—the essential nature, for instance, of the generic distinction of *Ochlerotatus* and *Finlaya*, of *Theobaldia* and *Culicella*—especially where conventional nomenclature is departed from. In a footnote on p. 78 is found: "See also under *Ochlerotatus geniculatus*," whereas in the text the genus *Finlaya geniculata* is described. It would help the student to be told in the handbook why certain characters determine Genus and others Species.

In the Systematic Account some description is given of the bionomics of the mosquitoes, humanly a most important study. Notwithstanding that a vast amount of scattered observation must be on unofficial record, our knowledge of the bionomics of the British mosquitoes is admittedly imperfect. This reproach should be removed by the authorities making liberal provision for the official prosecution of field work. Then we may expect an authoritative monograph of the British Culicidæ, for which this work of Dr. Lang is a valuable preparation.

A. M.

PRACTICAL TROPICAL SANITATION: A POCKET-BOOK FOR SANITARY INSPECTORS IN THE TROPICS. By E. P. Minett, M.D., D.P.H., D.T.M. and H., Major, R.A.M.C. (T.F.), Government Medical Officer of Health, British Guiana.

The author of this publication says, "This small book is written with the idea of providing a pocket reference book for sanitary inspectors in Tropical Countries." The idea is good, but it is questionable if the practical effort will have utility beyond the administrative domain of the writer. Sanitation in the Tropics is a very individual matter. Administration and executive are intimately linked. Conditions, matériel, and personnel are so diverse, that health officers have to work out their own local salvation, making the best of the staff and means provided. There are many interesting sketches and diagrams relating to conservancy, water-supplies, markets, disinfection, and other matters of sanitary importance. Certain by-laws, somewhat meticulously reproduced, should afford hints to pioneer officers in hygienically virgin soil. The style of the writer is conversational and strictly unconventional, perhaps designedly so and locally serviceable.

In a tropical situation where the forces of opposition are many and the temptation to slack down is strong, Dr. Minett is worthy of sympathy and encouragement, for the energy and enthusiasm evidenced in the publication of this little book.

A. M.