

BLOOD GROUPS AND BLOOD TRANSFUSION. By Alexander S. Wiener, A.B., M.D. Second Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1939. Pp. xvii + 306; 52 illustrations. Price 27s. 6d.

Since fresh knowledge regarding blood groups and blood transfusion is being so rapidly acquired, it is not surprising that Dr. Wiener should find it necessary to publish a second edition of his book. Indeed, in recent years so much literature has appeared that, in this edition, the author has not found it possible to make reference to all reports but has made an endeavour to draw attention only to all significant publications.

This book deals with the subject in a comprehensive way, and consequently it is not possible in the space at the disposal of the reviewer to consider all the headings under which the author treats his subject, but it may be helpful to those who are seeking a book containing detailed information if mention is made of the general layout and the scope of the work.

The first half of the book is concerned mainly with a discussion of the blood groups, selection of donors and the results of blood transfusion. It also deals with the technique of blood transfusions and the reactions that may follow their administration. Plasma transfusion which is now being carried out in the Army and blood substitutes are not discussed.

The second half of the book is confined to that aspect of the subject which deals with some of the fundamental principles of genetics and biometrics. In addition, the agglutinogens M and N with a useful chapter describing the technique of the preparation of immune sera and suitable methods for M-N tests are fully discussed. Anthropological investigations on the blood groups are also considered and the medico-legal application of blood tests is presented in great detail.

This is a book which will be found of value to those who wish to have a comprehensive survey of the fundamental facts concerning this ever-developing subject.

Correspondence.

DERMATOLOGY IN WAR TIME.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS."

SIR,—Most people will agree with what Colonel Ingram says in his admirable article entitled "Dermatology in War Time" (*R.A.M.C. JOURNAL*, August 1940). There is, however, one point which I should like to criticize; the dosage of Sulphapyridine recommended appears to be below the optimum. Many partially treated cases of gonorrhœa returning from France proved very resistant to further treatment and this was considered to be due to inadequate dosage. At home, I have recommended five grams the first day, four the second and three a day for the next few days; intensive

dosage in the early stages seems to give the best results and under optimum conditions 19–20 grams given in the first three days have given the highest percentage of cures. In general a high dosage over a short period appears more effective than a moderate dosage over a longer period.

The War Office,
London, S.W.1.
September 12, 1940.

I am, etc.,

T. E. OSMOND,
Lieutenant-Colonel,
Royal Army Medical Corps.

GAS CLEANSING CENTRES, FIRST AID POSTS, AND THEIR COUNTERPART IN THE FIELD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS."

SIR,—Captain W. A. Robinson in his article on the above subject in the August issue of the JOURNAL states that "it is obvious that it is not possible to establish buildings" for Gas Cleansing Centres in the forward areas and that "the principles involved in the centres can be applied in the field" by marking out separate areas on the ground.

When discussing First Aid Posts, however, Captain W. A. Robinson omits to mention that the use of buildings will frequently be impossible for this purpose and that the principle of marking out "a dirty" area on the ground for the reception of contaminated wounded applies in the same way.

It is further stated that "By cleansing a casualty at this Post he will be saved from the effects of Blister Gas *if he is treated early*. Even if ten or fifteen minutes have elapsed, the effects will be reduced."

It is obvious that only in rare cases will it be possible for a casualty to reach a First Aid Post in such a short time as ten to fifteen minutes and attention is therefore drawn to "Protection against Gas and Air Raids, 1939," Pamphlet No. 1, Section 106, para. 3 which states that "If the situation permits and life will not be endangered by the delay, decontamination of wounded men should be carried out in the area in which they are found." All contaminated clothing should be removed and the patient treated with Ointment, Anti-Gas.

The importance of stressing this point during training cannot be too strongly emphasized.

In order that patients who have been undressed may be re clothed, one suit of pyjamas should be carried with each stretcher in addition to the blankets.

September 2, 1940.

I am, etc.,

J. H. C. WALKER,
Lieutenant-Colonel, R.A.M.C.,
Training Officer, Anti-Gas,
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