

Reviews.

ORTHOPÆDIC SURGERY. (Third Edition.) By Walter Mercer, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.S. Edin., F.R.S. Edin. London: Edward Arnold & Co. 1943. Pp. xi+947 with 415 Illustrations. Price 45s.

A third edition of this book is welcome at present, and particularly to the military surgeon, for this is the only reasonably full and up-to-date work of its kind published in these islands. Its only rivals are either too short to be of much help to the practising surgeon or else have not been revised for twenty or more years.

This new edition reviews most of the recent work which has been published since the second edition of 1938. Despite many additions to the text the author has only added 42 more pages and it is to be regretted that circumstances have compelled the production of this, longer, edition in a smaller and less sturdy format and in a very much weaker binding.

Like its predecessors, this new edition gives a very complete yet succinct account of modern British orthopædic practice. It does not attempt to deal with recent fractures and dislocations neither is it an encyclopædia of orthopædic operations but it achieves its main object in a manner which is usually clear and efficient.

The chief defects of the work remain unchanged. It often attempts too much and its advice on treatment sometimes deteriorates into a list of eponymous operations somewhat uncritically recommended. Many such operations, such as Mr. H. A. Brittain's spinal fusion, are still very much on trial while others are almost antiques. Who nowadays performs cuneiform tarsectomy for club-foot (p. 52) or finds sequestrectomy of a tuberculous tarsus "frequently called for?" One finds with surprise that treatment with colloidal sulphur is recommended in some detail for osteoarthritis.

The military surgeon who turns to this work for advice about the most pressing orthopædic problems of the Army in training will be disappointed. The accounts of disabilities of the knee, feet and back follow the well-worn custom of systematic descriptions of many varied conditions with little help in the differential diagnosis and little guide as to what to expect from treatment. Good as these sections are they could be more helpful if these subjects were approached more from the point of view of a clinical problem and less from that of a textbook of systematic surgery. In connexion with backache sacralization of the fifth lumbar transverse processes receives an attention which most surgeons would consider undue.

The illustrations require further revision. Fig. 97 is meaningless: one regrets that a SINGLE hip spica is shown in the treatment of hip tuberculosis; fig. 185 shows a shoulder immobilized ABOVE the right angle; fig. 442 is frankly misleading and the illustration of Lambrinudi's operation for drop foot seems to have missed the main object of the deviser of that admirable procedure.

Despite these (possibly minor) criticisms the book remains an excellent and authoritative guide to orthopædics. It does what it sets out to do and does it well. It is a book which can be recommended with confidence to the senior student, the junior orthopædist or the general surgeon whom circumstances compel to "brush up" orthopædics.

MEDICINE IN BRITAIN. (British Life and Thought Series No. 17.) H. Clegg. London: Messrs. Longmans Green & Co., Ltd. 1943. Pp. 46. 10 photographs. Price 1s.

This is an admirable, timely and readable booklet. It gives a fair and adequate outline of the historical and present aspects of medicine in these islands and provides knowledge of many facts which are perhaps incompletely known to doctors as well as to the lay public.

Much of its usefulness lies in the provision of a good account of the medical services as they now exist ; this may be set beside those plans for the future, now under active discussion.

Almost everything is included from the medical student to the General Medical Council. It is to be hoped that in future editions space may be found for some account of the medical services of the Armed Forces of the Crown. In this issue they are mentioned only as adding " another bright hue to the medical quilt." J. W. H.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE EXTRA PHARMACOPŒIA. (Martindale.) Volume I. Twenty-second Edition. London : The Pharmaceutical Press. 1943. Pp. 48. Price 2s.

Since the publication of the first volume of the twenty-second edition of the Extra Pharmacopœia in May, 1941, many changes have been made, chiefly arising from war conditions, in the B.P. and the B.P.C. These changes are embodied in the Addenda to the Pharmacopœia and in the Supplements to the Codex. The 48-page Supplement to the Extra Pharmacopœia which has been published (Pharmaceutical Press, price 2s.) summarizes, in tabular form, the various additions and amendments, reference being made wherever possible to the corresponding page numbers in volume I. The Supplement includes also a list of the preparations of the National War Formulary as well as additions to the U.S. Pharmacopœia (U.S., p. xii) and to the American National Formulary (N.F. vii). Notes are given on recent Statutory Orders affecting the supply of drugs and on new proprietaries not included in volume I. C. B.

BOLLETTINO SANITARIA DELLA TRIPOLITANIA. Vol. II, No. 1, January, 1944.

We have received from the P.M.O., British Military Administration, Tripolitania, a copy of the first printed edition of the above medical *Bulletin*, produced entirely by the Italian medical staff.

Printed in Tripoli (at the outset the work of reproduction had to be carried out and distributed on typewritten sheets), this *Bulletin* may be regarded as a welcome sign of more settled conditions and an indication of collaboration between the British and Italian medical professions.