NEW BOOKS

The Conquest of Fear.  By HARLEY WILLIAMS.  Pp. 240, with 4 illustrations.  London:  Jonathan Cape.  1952.  Price 16s. net.

In three earlier volumes, Harley Williams has established himself as a writer of medical biographies and in this he offers a further series.  His pictures are of different sizes and concern very different types.  Chapter one deals with Edward Jenner of Berkeley, the second with a group of experts and pioneers in tropical medicine.  Another deals with the outstanding figures Moynihan and Dawson of Penn.  Going a little further afield he gives the stories of the scientists, Crookes and Röntgen, and lastly a most remarkable account of the medical history of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Those who have enjoyed his previous books will look forward with pleasure to his most recent contribution.

Dictionnaire Français-Anglais, Anglais-Français des termes médicaux et biologiques.

Edited by PIERRE LÉPINE, assisted by G. D. KRAFFNOFF.  Pp. 829+xxv.  London:  H. K. Lewis.  1952.  Price 63s. net.

This new dictionary is a valuable addition to the doctor's library.  A careful selection has been made of words not adequately dealt with in standard works.  Equivalent words and clear definitions are given.  In a special section are included tables for the conversion of English weights and measures into international metric units.  This authoritative dictionary should be welcomed by the medical profession.

The Cry and the Covenant.  By MORTON THOMPSON.  Pp. 498.  London:  Heinemann.  1951.  Price 15s. net.

This is an historical novel written about the life of Ignaz Semmelweis who did so much for the control of puerperal fever.  It has been written by a layman who has obviously studied his subject very thoroughly, and most of his excursions into medical matters are extremely reasonable.  It is a most extraordinary story.  There are depicted the terrible conditions of the lying-in hospitals, Semmelweis's unremitting search for the cause of the plague and his eventual success.  Semmelweis banished puerperal fever from the wards under his own care, but he struggled in vain to persuade a conservative and complacent profession to recognise the truth.  Reverses, insults and neglect dogged his career and eventually his mind gave way.

An enthralling story, of the greatest interest to the medical profession.

Surgery of the Chest.  By JULIAN JOHNSON, M.D., D.sc., and CHARLES K. KIRBY, M.D.  387 pages, 246 of text and 117 of illustrations.  Chicago:  Year Book Publishers.  1952.  Price 68s.

This book succeeds in its purpose of providing a clear description of the technique used by the authors in thoracic surgical operations.  That part concerned with pulmonary resection is excellent.  The numerous illustrations are well arranged, a page of admirable pen-and-ink drawings opposite the text referring to them, the paragraphs and drawings correspondingly lettered.  In some sections the choice of patients for operation is briefly discussed, but there is no indication of the mortality and failure rates of the operations.  There are good introductory chapters on the investigation of thoracic disease and the management of thoracic injuries.  Bronchoscopy and cesophagoscopy are not described.

The description of the first stage of thoracoplasty leaves the reader in uncertainty which the four pages illustrating thoracoplasty do not dispel.  Most of these show the extent of the resected ribs which could have been stated in a few words, but none shows the relations of the first rib as exposed by resection of the rib.
Medical Mycology. By G. C. AINSWORTH, B.SC., PH.D., F.L.S. Pp. ix+105, with 26 illustrations. London: Pitman & Sons Ltd. 1952. Price 15s. net.

This refreshing little book is not intended to be a systematic account of the pathogenic fungi or an aid in the diagnosis of mycotic diseases; it is as the author indicates by his sub-title, an introduction.

No specialised knowledge of the subject is necessary in order to follow the text. In each of the eight chapters an account of a group of fungal infections is used to introduce the discussion of a problem in medical mycology; for instance an account of ring-worm fungi introduces the taxonomic problem.

There are approximately 100 references to the literature of the last twelve years.

Osteoarthritis of the Hip. By W. ALEXANDER LAW. Pp. xi+87, with 31 illustrations. London: Butterworth & Co. 1952. Price 25s. net.

This book is a review of a consecutive series of 160 patients suffering from osteoarthritis of the hip joint, 44 of whom were bilateral cases, treated by Smith-Petersen's vitallium mould arthroplasty. Useful chapters on etiology, pathology and clinical features are included, the opinion being expressed that quite a number of cases placed in the primary osteoarthritis group are really the result of a slight degree of slipping of the upper femoral epiphysis. An improvement index of 27.5 per cent., in conjunction with the fact that pain is very considerably alleviated without loss of stability or power, make the author consider this particular operation well worth while.

Advances in Medicine and Surgery. Pp. xii+441. London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1952. Price 40s. net.

This book contains the collected writings of the post-graduate teachers of the Graduate School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania. The volume consists of ten sections, each section discussing the recent advances that have taken place in connection with a selected subject. Such topics as the present status of adrenal cortical hormones, the role of potassium in health and disease and the modern aspects of the medical and surgical treatment of hypertension are but a few of the subjects which are discussed at length.

Each section is well written, all the modern facts are presented clearly and concisely and the book can be thoroughly recommended to all physicians and surgeons interested in post-graduate study.

The Treatment of Injuries to the Nervous System. By D. MUNRO, M.D., F.A.C.S. Pp. xvi+284, with 47 illustrations. London: W. B. Saunders Co., Ltd. 1952. Price 37s. 6d.

This book, which has been written primarily for the use of the general surgeon and general practitioner, deals with the operative treatment, management and nursing-care of all types of injuries to the nervous system.

It is based on the author's wide experience of such cases in the Neurological Clinic of the Boston City Hospital.

There is, in addition, a section which deals with technical procedures of interest mainly to the neuro-surgeon.

This compact book contains much practical advice on many problems on which information is not readily available. It is well illustrated and contains a number of useful tables dealing with the classification, signs and symptoms of injuries at different anatomical levels in the nervous system.

Migraine and Periodic Headache. By NEVIL LEYTON, M.A., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. Pp. xii+115. London: William Heinemann. 1952. Price 12s. 6d. net.

This small volume deals mainly with the treatment of migraine, in which Dr Leyton has gained extensive experience both at a migraine clinic in London and in private practice. Remarkable success is claimed for hormone therapy and for prostigmin and histamine desensitisation.
Lumbar Disc Lesions. By J. R. ARMSTRONG. Pp. viii+228, with 56 illustrations. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1952. Price 42s. net.

This monograph on what is called in the foreword a "recalcitrant problem" fills what has been a very empty space is orthopaedic literature. The condition is now so common that it is difficult to remember that it has only been recognised for some seventeen years. It is now almost a household word.

Armstrong has produced a very comprehensive review of the problem with, amongst others, chapters on the pathology, the clinical picture and the treatment, which are very fully and ably described and where the views are for the most part the views of contemporary British orthopaedic surgeons.

The most useful chapters, particularly to the orthopaedic surgeon, are those on the clinical examination, for the author deals with this important aspect with the most meticulous care. Helpful advice, too, is given in those cases where there is a doubt about adding an arthrodesis to the operation of disc removal. He emphasises that the treatment of the prolapsed disc, whether operative or conservative, cannot restore to normal a lumbar intervertebral joint in which degeneration disc changes have taken place, and details the indications for immediate arthrodesis. It is certainly easier to do it immediately rather than later, especially if wire sutures are used in the deep layers, and all orthopaedic surgeons will agree with this. The anterior insertion of grafts between the bodies is a satisfactory enough way of dealing with spondylolisthesis but, the author continues "is not often used in the treatment of disc lesions, probably because orthopaedic surgeons do not readily use the transperitoneal approach to the spine." So much for an ultra-special training!

This is a most excellent and tremendously helpful monograph and is superbly produced.

Observations on the Early Public Health Movement in Scotland. The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Memoir No. 8. By J. H. F. BROTHERSTON, M.A., M.D., D.P.H. Pp. xii+118, with 3 illustrations. London: H. K. Lewis. 1952. Price 21s.

In this slim, attractively produced volume, Dr Brotherston presents with considerable skill a balanced and attractive account of the early public health movement in Scotland. The movement sprang from the urgent needs of the poor, and the primary attack was directed towards improvement of the living conditions of the people. Yet, though this reform was pressing, the climate of public opinion had to be conditioned before much progress could be made, and both municipal and central government authorities were slow to respond to the call of reform. The essay is well documented and is a noteworthy contribution to the social history of Scotland.

Principles and Practice of Anaesthesiology. By VINCENT J. COLLINS, M.D. Pp. 528, with 99 illustrations. London: Henry Kimpton. 1952. Price 75s. net.

Dr Collins has collected a large mass of well-documented material and presented it on old-fashioned lines that are now somewhat outmoded in modern textbooks of anaesthesia. There is a surfeit of technical minutiae which the author in an apparent desire for comprehensiveness seems to have been loath to reduce. In consequence less space has been available for discussion of basic physiological and pharmacological principles in the detail which these merit. Learners in the specialty of anaesthetics will find that most of the answers to their enquiries have been included, but not all of them. They and senior anaesthetists in many parts of the world, some even in North America, may justifiably show surprise that this book makes no mention of the several methods of induced hypotension which have aroused much interest in the past three or four years.

The illustrations and general production of this volume are good, as might be expected for 75s., but many readers will feel that at such a price they might be spared the irritation of a considerable amount of mis-spelling, redundancies and poor syntax.
NEW BOOKS

The Principles and Methods of Physical Diagnosis. By Simon S. Leopold, M.D. Pp. 407+23, with 351 illustrations+10 colour plates. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders. 1952. Price 37s. 6d. net.

An introduction to clinical medicine more gentle than normal allows the material of physical diagnosis to be rearranged, with the modernising of some parts and altering the emphasis classically put on others. It is clearly set out with numerous biographical footnotes and ample illustrations, which include several useful frozen specimens in cross-section to show internal relationships. Specialised sections include an explanation of the physics of chest sounds which may not lighten the task of already overburdened undergraduates.

Medical Annual 1952. Edited by Sir Henry Tidy and A. Rundle Short, assisted by about forty contributors. Pp. 476, with many illustrations. Bristol: John Wright. 1952. Price 27s. 6d.

In its seventieth year of publication this popular Annual is compiled according to the usual practice of earlier editions. The strong team of outstanding experts has culled world literature for important advances in medical knowledge. Abstracts are of adequate length and full references are included so that original papers may be consulted if desired.

The Medical Annual is an excellent publication, indispensable to all who wish to keep abreast of the latest advances.

The Circulation of the Blood. By William Harvey, M.D., F.R.C.P. Edited by E. A. Parkyn. Pp. xxvi+230. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. 1952. Price 5s.

Harvey's original publication was made at Frankfort-on-Main in 1628 and the first English edition appeared in 1653, four years before his death. The present edition is a reprint of that issued in 1874 by the Sydenham Society. Since 1907 Harvey's classical work has appeared uniform with the other outstanding books in Everyman’s series.

The editor's introduction gives some account of William Harvey and his times and serves as a background to the book itself. In addition to the main theme, the book also reprints two disquisitions on the circulation of the blood addressed to Professor John Revlan of Paris. There are also a series of letters written by Harvey and an account of a post-mortem which Harvey made on Thomas Parr who was reputed to have lived to the age of 152 years.

The publishers are to be congratulated on making readily available this medical classic.

Hormones, Psychology and Behaviour and Steroid Hormone Administration. Ciba Foundation Colloquia on Endocrinology. Volume III. Edited by G. E. W. Wolstenholme, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., B.CH. Pp. xvi+380, with many figures. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1952. Price 25s. net.

The first part of this volume contains material which will prove of great interest to many who are not primarily concerned with endocrinology. It deals with fascinating studies of the influence of hormones on behaviour in human and animal subjects. Naturally it is most concerned with steroid hormones and ACTH. It is well written, and humour lightens at least some of its pages. It is perhaps not surprising that the discussion of the various papers is particularly stimulating.

The second part is rather more prosaic, but contains some valuable information about the fate of pellets of steroid hormones implanted into the tissues. The closing remarks of the Chairman, Professor J. H. Gaddum, constitute an admirable review of methods of administration of drugs and the means employed to prolong their activity. Our thanks are due to the Ciba Foundation for a worthy addition to their excellent series.
Steroid Metabolism and Estimation. Ciba Foundation Colloquia on Endocrinology. Volume II. Edited by G. E. W. WOLSTENHOLME, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., B.Ch. Pp. xix+429, with numerous figures. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1952. Price 35s.

This new volume contains the proceedings of two conferences on the steroid hormones. The books deal with two of the most complicated and controversial facets of endocrinology and affords the reader an opportunity to read of the work and thoughts of some of the best known authorities in this field. The section dealing with steroid estimation is of particular interest as it discusses fully and honestly the many difficulties which arise in this work. It should be read by any who intend to employ steroid estimations as a guide to diagnosis and treatment in clinical work.

Disorders of the Heart and Circulation. Edited by ROBERT L. LEVY, M.D. Pp. 944. New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons. 1951. Price 91s. 6d.

This volume is composed of thirty-four chapters, each the work of a well known American authority, and each originally contributed to the Nelson Loose-Leaf System of Medicine. Here the articles are collected as a separate monograph where those interested in cardiovascular disorders will find many topics of great importance in present-day practice admirably presented. Most of the chapters have been revised and brought up to date in the light of recent advances but largely on sentimental grounds the late Dr Maud Abbott’s classic on congenital heart disease has been retained in its original form. That the outlook on this subject has advanced in a remarkable way is amply justified by the masterly review of Dr Richard Bing in the succeeding chapter on the physiology of congenital heart disease. It is unavoidable that in a collection of essays ranging over the whole field of cardiovascular disease some overlapping should occur but the authors express individual opinions from a wide experience, and in many ways this may be said to enhance the value of the book, which is well illustrated and well produced on a high quality paper.

Cardiographic Technique. By S. L. BARRON and A. SCHOTT, M.D. Pp. vii+156, with 58 illustrations. London: William Heinemann. 1952. Price 21s.

This monograph describes for technicians the theory and practice of electrocardiography. The different types of apparatus in modern usage are explained. It is full of sound advice on the production of clear and accurate records.

There is little new in this book but it supplies a real need for the trainee technician, and affords a compact and reliable source of information with which to supplement his practical instruction.

The practical aspects of vectorcardiography and phonocardiography are not fully considered.

Prostatctomy. By CHARLES WELLS. Pp. vii+103, with 72 illustrations. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1952. Price 24s. net.

In this monograph, the author describes his experiences with 200 cases of prostatic obstruction treated by himself and his assistants.

An historical review of the subject is followed by a recapitulation of the pathological processes involved and their effects. The author then proceeds to clinical descriptions and the investigation of his cases, and so to treatment and the results obtained.

The method of treatment employed is essentially that already described by Wilson Hey. As now set forth it contains little that is new and much that is controversial.

The results shown are commendable. The mortality rate is 3 per cent. and the morbidity is 14 per cent. It is unfortunate, however, that the claims in the text and the tables of results do not fully agree.

Considering the appeal and purpose of a monograph it would seem to the reviewer that this work might have appeared more suitably as a contribution to a journal than in its present form.