NEW BOOKS

Pathological Physiology and Clinical Description of the Anaemias.

By William Bosworth Castle, M.D., S.M. (Hon.), and George Richard Minot, M.D., S.D. (Hon.), F.R.C.P. Edin. (Hon.); edited by Henry A. Christian, A.M., M.D., LL.D., Sc.D. (Hon.). Reprinted from the Oxford Loose-leaf Medicine. Pp. ix + 205. New York: Oxford University Press (Milford). 1936. Price 15s.

This section of the Oxford Loose-leaf Medicine has been well worth issuing as a separate publication. It deals with one of the most active fields of modern medicine, and is written by two men whose work has had a large part in stimulating that activity. The book opens with a brief introduction to the physiology of the erythron, outlines modern diagnostic methods, gives a classification of the anaemias, and then discusses each type in detail. Treatment in general is discussed in a separate chapter, and there is finally an excellent bibliography of almost 700 references. Pathological physiology is kept well in the foreground throughout, and is discussed lucidly and in detail for every type of anaemia. The discussion of treatment, being rigidly based upon the pathological physiology, is probably the most authoritative now available; it is trimmed free of empiricism to a refreshing degree. The clinical descriptions are brief but adequate. Pathological anatomy is only briefly discussed; but the authors have done the pathologist a service in emphasising the inadequacy of his knowledge in this field. The book shows a condensation and commendable restraint typical of a systematic text-book, such as that for which it has originally been written. On the other hand, it must be admitted that we would have relished a more discursive mood in writers of such eminence. Nevertheless this monograph can be heartily recommended to clinicians, physiologists and pathologists as an authoritative review of the modern position of the anaemias.

Electricity in Therapeutics. By Harold H. V. Cross, Ph.D., with a Preface by Dr Georges Bourguignon. Pp. 380, 239 illustrations. London: Crosley Lockwood & Son, Ltd. 1936. Price 25s.

This book is very clearly written and plentifully illustrated, but is essentially a book for the student or practitioner of electro-therapy. It cannot be recommended to the general physician as a book of reference, as the largest part of the text is taken up with physical principles and detailed descriptions of apparatus. The chapter on the theory and technique of electro-diagnosis and the uses of electricity in pathological conditions is interesting and instructive, particularly
the description of chronaxy. The chapters on ionic medication are very complete and up to date. A section on short-wave therapy is also included and the comparison between its uses and that of diathermy should be of great value to those who are interested in this form of therapy. Unfortunately the machines described are not very frequently seen in this country.

Common Sense and Psychology. By Alan Maberly, M.A., M.B., Ch.B. Pp. 160. London: Frederick Muller, Ltd. 1936. Price 5s.

This is a very good little book from the point of view both of its commonsense and of its psychology. It is almost entirely free from technical terminology—let alone psycho-analytic jargon—without to any great extent sacrificing definiteness and accuracy. Some of the chapters are better than others. For example, those on "Sex" and "Parenthood and the Child" are not without controversial matter, and accordingly are of somewhat less value. Even these chapters, however, are distinctly good, and the author has performed a very real service for mental hygiene by writing a book which the family doctor may safely recommend to most patients.

The Practice of Medicine. By Jonathan Campbell Meakins, M.D., LL.D., F.R.C.P. (Lond. and Edin.). Pp. xv+1343, with 505 illustrations. London: Henry Kimpton. 1936. Price 42s.

This large volume from the pen of Professor Meakins makes a distinct advance in the presentation of the subject of systematic medicine. It is not an encyclopaedic book of reference, nor a ready system of differential diagnosis encumbered with etiological obscurities and statistical data, but a laudable attempt to study disease as a manifestation of disordered physiological processes. Symptoms, in their causation and significance, receive particular attention. For these reasons the student trained to think in terms of disordered function will find the book of particular help in that it will convey to him a surer understanding of disease as he meets it in his clinical training. As might well be expected in the present state of knowledge, certain of the subdivisions of medicine, such as the respiratory or circulatory systems, lend themselves readily enough to this method of approach, but there is much to learn and know in the everyday practice of medicine for which physiology and pathology have so far provided no sure foundation. In spite of these lesser limitations the author has made a really notable contribution to medical literature—a text-book, we believe, which in the course of time will take a pre-eminent place in the doctor's library. No one reading the introductory chapter can fail to be impressed by the author's broad outlook, the charm of his literary expression, or the sound advice
New Books

offered to the physician in the approach to his patient and in the conduct of his practice. It is perhaps unavoidable that certain symptoms, in themselves equally important to the sufferer, receive more attention than others. One of the best and longest sections in the book is devoted to the mechanism and significance of dyspnœa, whereas the subject of convulsions, the exact nature of which makes precise diagnosis often difficult, receives but little detailed consideration. The book is profusely illustrated. All the pictures are interesting and instructive, but not a few of the borrowed plates are worn and lack the sharp definition desirable as figures for the text. Many of the X-ray reproductions are disappointing and fail in their object. These are minor criticisms and detract but little from the general standard of thoroughness and completeness. It is a valuable and very helpful book, well written, easily read, and augmented by useful references to current medical literature.

A Doctor's Odyssey. By Victor Heiser, M.D. Pp. 547. London: Jonathan Cape. 1936. Price 15s.

From the first chapter, in which the author describes the bursting of a dam in the hills behind the city of Johnstown in 1889, when he "saw his boyhood home crushed like an egg-shell before his eyes," and his parents swept away in the flood, leaving him "alone in the world," to the last when, in 1934, he asked to be placed upon the retired list, this book records an eventful life of service to humanity in the field of preventive medicine. The wanderer of this Odyssey is Dr Victor G. Heiser, who, in his capacity as what he modestly calls "a globe-trotting drummer" for the Rockefeller Foundation, has made no fewer than sixteen trips round the world and worked in some forty-five countries, bringing with him the means of applying the most advanced scientific knowledge of hygiene to the conditions of primitive and backward peoples. Wherever the great plagues—cholera, smallpox, hook-worm, beri-beri, malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, or what other—were taking their toll of human life, Dr Heiser was there to advise and direct those on the spot, and to administer the material help which the great Foundation he represented so abundantly provided. The record of his work in the Philippines, to take only one example, is a striking evidence of what the application of laboratory research to field conditions can do under a resourceful director to overcome endemic diseases. His story is full of human interest, and is told with a restraint which carries conviction. He has tales of adventure to tell, anecdotes of people he has met, gentle and simple, and scraps of folk-lore, and he tells them with the crisp form of humour characteristic of his race—"There are few anti-vaccinationists now in the Philippines, most of them have died of smallpox." This is a work which combines the qualities of a scientific treatise on preventive medicine with those of a first-class book of travel.
New Books

British Masters of Medicine. Edited by Sir D'Arcy Power. Pp. xv+242, with 33 illustrations. London: Medical Press and Circular. 1936. Price 7s. 6d.

It was well worth while re-issuing in book form the series of medical biographies published in the Medical Press and Circular in 1934 and 1935. Twenty-four of the outstanding figures in British medical history, beginning with Harvey and carrying on to Starling, have been selected, and each article is accompanied by a portrait, which adds materially to the interest of the text. In the limited space available under the conditions of the original publication, each of the writers has succeeded in giving a clear, succinct and judicial estimate of the hero assigned to him, which in almost every case has the effect of making the reader wish for more. For this reason, if for no other, this book should be put within reach of every medical student. It cannot fail to stimulate an interest in medical history, and his technical studies will be lightened if he can associate something of the personality of Harvey, Percivall Pott, John Hunter, Jenner, Bright, Simpson, Lister, Turner, Osler, James Mackenzie, to mention only a few, with what they contributed to the body of medical knowledge.

Physical Therapeutic Methods in Otolaryngology. Abraham R. Hollender. Pp. 442, with 189 illustrations. London: Henry Kimpton. 1937. Price 21s.

This publication is intended to present a review and evaluation of all physical therapeutic methods indicated in the practice of Otolaryngology. It is divided into three parts: the first deals with the theoretical aspects of the various forms of electrotherapeutics, ranging from the simple galvanic cell to X-rays and including radium. The second part deals with the practical application of these; and the third is mainly devoted to neoplastic conditions. The merits of the different methods described are fairly presented, their advantages and disadvantages are discussed and their limitations clearly defined. In discussing the treatment of sinusitis, no mention is made of suction-displacement. With regard to tonsillectomy, the author agrees that "it is only when the classic procedure is contra-indicated that electro-surgery may be accepted as a rational substitute." Few authorities in this country will agree with the views expressed regarding the free use of the electro-cautery in laryngeal tuberculosis. There are eleven contributors, ten of whom are American. The majority of the illustrations are excellent and each chapter concludes with a useful list of references. A list of definitions is appended and there is an adequate index.