NEW BOOKS

Cataract and Anomalies of the Lens. By John G. Bellows, M.D., Ph.D. Pp. 624, with 208 text illustrations and 4 colour plates. London: Henry Kimpton. 1944. Price 60s. net.

The scope of this book may be estimated by the following sentence from the foreword: "Certainly this material cannot be found elsewhere in a single volume or in many volumes." The first six chapters deal with the history, development, structure, composition, metabolism and developmental defects of the lens. In the next three chapters cataract due to pathological causes is discussed, and the last chapter of nearly 100 pages is devoted to senile cataract, including its treatment. The presentation throughout is excellent and each subject is exhaustively dealt with in detail. The illustrations are numerous, good and helpful. A valuable feature is the extremely full list of references to the literature, and there are excellent indices of authors and subjects. This book will be specially valuable as a work of reference and should be in the library of every ophthalmic surgeon.

Fractures and Orthopaedic Surgery for Nurses and Masseuses. By Arthur Naylor, Ch.M., F.R.C.S. Pp. xxii+288, with 243 illustrations. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1945. Price 16s. net.

The success of orthopaedic surgery depends so much on the work of nurses and physiotherapists that the publication of such an authoritative book as this is a noteworthy event. This is especially so when one considers that in the general training of these workers the bare minimum of instruction is given. The book deals generally with the application of the principles of surgery to the orthopaedic branch, and in particular to the three essentials of treatment—prevention of deformity, correction of deformity, and the maintenance of correction. Orthopaedic apparatus, technique, and methods of correction of deformity are dealt with in three excellent chapters, and thereafter the various orthopaedic conditions are described in quite considerable detail and with many good illustrations which make the descriptive matter easily understandable. The author wisely pays special attention to those parts of treatment that are usually done by the technical assistants, such as the application of splints.

The book, as one would expect from the publishers, is beautifully produced, and in the opinion of the reviewer could be used with profit by medical students preparing for their qualifying examination. For nurses and physiotherapists there can be nothing better.

Surgical Disorders of the Chest. By J. K. Donaldson, B.S., M.D., F.A.C.S. Pp. 364, with 127 illustrations. London: Henry Kimpton. 1945. Price 33s. net.

There is little doubt about the need for a book like this, since advances in the thoracic field have been so rapid in the last few years that the majority of surgeons have the greatest difficulty in keeping abreast of the voluminous amount of current literature on the subject. It is the responsibility of the specialist in chest work to assist the profession as a whole in learning to do well that work which is within their legitimate domain, and Major Donaldson, realising this, sets out to assist in this work and succeeds in doing so.

The book is written in three parts. The first deals with chest injuries and various surgical conditions of the chest wall, the second with non-tuberculous inflammatory conditions, intra-thoracic tumours, and congenital errors, while the third is devoted to collapse therapy in tuberculosis, with some comments on post-operative complications and anaesthesia.

An admirable broad outlook is taken on the treatment of the ordinary non-tuberculous empyema. The author says that the type of treatment may vary with
the type of nursing attention afterwards, since with unskilled dressings mixed infections are easily introduced.

The principle of the operative technique of lobectomy and pneumonectomy is discussed, and good line drawings to depict the anatomy necessary in a hilar ligation help considerably.

In the description of thoracoplasty for apical cavities a well-balanced review is given of the modern methods, and the author points out the dangers of the Semb type of operation, particularly in the presence of much peripleuritis. There is no doubt, however, that where it can be done it increases the probability of complete cavity obliteration.

This book amply fulfils the hope of the author to produce a somewhat epitomised volume dealing with fundamental advances in thoracic surgery. It is written so well that it is easily readable, and the production calls for no criticism.

The Premature Baby. By V. Mary Crosse, M.D. (Lond.), D.P.H., M.M.S.A., D.R.C.O.G. Pp. viii+156, with 14 illustrations. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1945. Price 10s. 6d.

This book describes the methods of care and feeding of premature babies developed at the Sorrento Maternity Home in Birmingham. This Premature Unit, opened in 1931, has been under the medical charge of Dr Mary Crosse, author of the book, from the first up to the present time; and by 1943 the Unit had dealt with 2575 premature infants. The excellent results obtained are all the more impressive when it is realised that 85 per cent. of these infants were admitted to the Unit from their own homes.

The book is based on long practical experience of the problem of prematurity, and gives concise details of the whole technique of management and feeding of the premature from birth until the clinical condition warrants the return of the baby to its own home. The technique of management is described both as applicable to an institution and to the home. The author’s methods are not complicated and can be carried out anywhere. The good results achieved are due both to the scientific soundness of these methods and no less to the thoroughness with which they have been carried out. The book deserves to be widely read and studied by all doctors and nurses who are responsible for the care of premature infants.

The Amino Acid Composition of Proteins and Foods. By R. J. Block and D. Bolling. Pp. xiv+396. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1945. Price $6.50.

Dr Block and Miss Bolling have produced a monograph which will be of very great value to all who are practically interested in the study of proteins and their composition. They give clearly written descriptions of the methods available for estimating the various amino-acids, and increase the reader’s indebtedness by pointing out the difficulties and sources of error, and by indicating those methods which are the most reliable.

For each amino-acid they give tables of the percentages found in various proteins by different workers, and in each case they state the method used, indicate which, in their personal opinion, are the “best values,” and give the mean with standard error. In a later chapter these mean values are collected in tables which summarise the available knowledge of the composition of many important proteins.

The authors rightly emphasise the importance of a knowledge of protein composition in nutrition, pointing out that, though other factors are concerned, the nutritive value of a protein depends on the “essential” amino-acids it contains. Accordingly they include calculations of the essential amino-acid requirements of man and of the quantities of these amino-acids supplied by various proteins.

Add to all this a comprehensive bibliography and a good index, and it is obvious that here is a veritable mine of information.