Appendicitis.—By H. A. Royster, A.B., M.D. New York and London: D. Appleton and Co. 1927. Pp. 370 with two coloured plates and 56 figures in the text. Price 21s. Available from Messrs. Butterworth and Co., Calcutta. Price Rs. 15-12.

Appendicitis is such a common disease in the general practitioner's work that any monograph which will further its scientific understanding will always be appreciated in spite of the many books, articles, and journals that have already been written on the subject.

The author has reviewed the important papers dealing with inflammation of the appendix for the last 5 years and has given his own views and the opinions of others on our present knowledge concerning appendicitis. This monograph opens with a large and well-illustrated history of the subject.

Writing as a married man of more than twenty years standing, the reviewer considers that this part of the book would help innumerable couples to make marriage a much happier business than it is wont to be. The author is emphatic on one aspect of marriage; the bride must be wooed as much at the end of marriage than before; the sexual impulses generated in the female partner must be gratified, and only when the husband has educated his partner fully is sexual intercourse fruitful, and desired, and not resisted by the wife.

That this is true is a fact which almost every member of the medical profession probably knows from personal experience of the practice of his profession. The crude bachelor's idea that the nuptial night is an orgy of indulgence on the part of the husband, and the honeymoon a prolongation of eroticism on the part of the male partner, is nonsense, as every married man should know. There is no period of married life when more consideration and more inhibition is called for than the female partner must be educated, and considered—at every step. And Dr. van de Velde's writing is plain speaking itself. He describes the preliminaries to sexual intercourse very fully, and details eleven positions for coitus, with a table to show the different types of persons of both sexes to which they are applicable. Graphs and pictures which present the graphic form of the sensations of both partners in different types of intercourse. In common with most medical experience he condemns "coitus interruptus" unreservedly; it leaves the female partner with erotic impulses fully aroused but frustrated, and the resulting pelvic congestion lasting for hours after the act. Even the after-effects of coitus are considered.

In Part IV, the bodily, psychic, emotional and mental hygiene of intercourse are considered; and again the advice given is sane, sound, and practical. A feature of the book is its "interplay" of authoritative, ancient and modern—with regard to the art of love; there is here much that is both witty and apposite.

Present-day marriage is an utterly blind business. The two partners suddenly drive into it with little or no pre-knowledge, or pre-comprehension. The result is too often the sequel of repulsion on the part of the wife, unfaithfulness on the part of one or both partners, mutual dissatisfaction, and—finally—the divorce court. Dr. van de Velde's main thesis is that this is preventable; but it is necessary that the husband should realize that "marriage is a science," that the female partner has to be initiated and educated in the fullest senses of the terms, with the utmost consideration and care. That thesis we believe to be a very true one, but it is by no means as yet universally realized. The medical man is not infrequently consulted by patients of both sexes with regard to such intimate matters, and—in the terms of Dr. Johnston Abraham, who writes the introduction—we believe that "this is a book that should be in the library of every doctor, who looks upon his patients not as 'cases,' but as human, very human beings entrusted to his care."

APPENDICITIS.—By H. A. Royster, A.B., M.D. New York and London: D. Appleton and Co. 1927. Pp. 370 with two coloured plates and 66 figures in the text. Price 21s. Available from Messrs. Butterworth and Co., Calcutta. Price Rs. 15-12.
18th century and clinically is the product of the 19th century. Special chapters are devoted to the anatomy, physiology, etiology, pathology, symptomatology, diagnosis, complications and prognosis. They are discussed in great detail and in a clear, convincing style. The paragraph on diet as a causation is most interesting. That diet plays a large part in the disease is well-known and accounts for the lower incidence among Indians.

Rolled millet flour is supposed to be a cause of the increased frequency of appendicitis amongst the highly civilized nations. On the other hand, other authors attribute it to an excess of meat and fat in the diet. A special chapter is devoted to appendicitis in children and the author emphatically states that the only treatment for this ailment in children is surgical—no matter in which stage the patient is seen. The chapter on treatment is excellent: diagnosis, early operation by a competent surgeon, avoidance of purgatives and morphia are the essentials that diminish the death rate in appendicitis.

The author quotes Rutherford Morrison who says: “There would be no percentage of deaths from appendicitis if every case commencing with acute pain, developing tenderness and rigidity of the abdomen and quickening of the pulse were operated upon within 12 hours.” The author advises the McBurney or grid-iron incision in acute cases, but advocates the Battle incision for all chronic cases in which it is necessary to explore or operate upon the upper abdomen or pelvis. In England the tendency is nowadays to give up the Battle incision and replace it by the paramedian incision for less obvious cases where inspection of the abdominal contents may be required.

The monograph is well brought out; the illustrations are good; it is a book which will be read with great interest by the general practitioner as well as the surgeon and we strongly recommend it as a useful addition to any medical library.

F. O. G. K.

Annual Reports.

REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE PUNJAB MENTAL HOSPITAL, LAHORE, FOR THE YEAR 1927. GOVERNMENT PRINTING PRESS, PUNJAB. PRICE Rs. 1-1.

Several features of interest are recorded in the Punjab Mental Hospital Report for 1927.

Admission and Discharge.—1. Population.—The number of patients remaining under treatment at the 1st January, 1927, was males 665 and females 182, making a total of 847. During the year 397 patients, of whom 317 were males and 80 females (the figures include readmissions, and cases sent for observation; some of the latter were discharged without certification) were admitted to the hospital. The total number of patients treated thus amounted to 1,244, being 94 in excess of those treated in 1926.

The average population for the year was 899.88, as compared with 854.19 in the preceding year. The population rose very rapidly during the latter half of the year and on 25th November, 1927, there were no less than 956 patients under treatment. The maximum number of patients under treatment in 1926 was 884.

The total number discharged was 218, as compared with 224 in 1926, of whom 132 were discharged as cured, 58 as improved, 6 not improved and 22 otherwise.

The percentage of cures to the daily average strength was 14.48 as compared with 11.47 in 1926.

2. Statistics and Mortality.—The death rate expressed as a percentage of the average strength was 11.45 as compared with 9.25 in 1926 and 14.23 in 1925. Out of 102 deaths, influenza and pneumonia each accounted for 19. During the year 55 patients were treated for pneumonia with 19 deaths and 81 for tuberculosis of various forms with 15 deaths. Various intestinal diseases such as dysentery, diarrhoea, colitis and enteritis accounted for 86 admissions to the hospital with 9 deaths. There were 11 deaths from epilepsy and status epilepticus.

3. Criminal Patients.—There was an increase of 20 in the number of patients treated during the year under review. No less than 53 criminals were admitted, making a total of 207 patients under treatment. There were 164 criminals in the institution at the close of the year.

4. Accommodation, New Buildings, Etc.—The new hospital section on the female side has not yet been completely taken over, as the head of water was insufficient for the water carriage system, which has been installed. A new tube well has been sunk in order to remedy this defect.

The report of Major Lodge-Patch, Superintendent of the Hospital and Mr. R. Chandra, r.c.s., who were deputed by the Punjab Government (Ministry of Local Self-Government) to visit mental hospitals in other provinces was received during the year and is under the consideration of Government.

The so-called “Hospital Section” is not suited for the treatment of patients; and the Superintendent has made proposals for remodelling the buildings so as to make them suitable for modern methods of treatment of mental patients.

Reference has been made in the previous paragraph to the water carriage system which has been installed in the Female Mental Hospital and is working satisfactorily. The insanitary open drains has been abolished, and it is hoped that a similar system of sanitation will be introduced on the male side in due course.

The sanitary condition of the Mental Hospital will continue to be unsatisfactory until the multi-stage Storm Water Channel is prevented from being a breeding ground of mosquitoes. The Director of Public Health has asked to recommend measures for dealing with this menace to the health of the patients in the hospital and other inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

During 1927, there were no deaths by violence and no fatal accidents. There were 3 escapes during the year under report but all the patients were recovered.

As in previous years, the manic-depressive psychoses account for the greatest number of admissions—no less than 199 out of a total of 397. Seventy-one cases of insanity due to cannabis indica during the year were admitted and 29 cases of dementia praecox.

The Superintendent, Major C. J. Lodge-Patch, m.c., r.c.s., is making every effort to bring the hospital into line with the high standards now prevailing in similar institutions in Western countries.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSIONER WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, FOR 1926. VOL. I. WITH APPENDICES. CALCUTTA: GOVERNMENT OF INDIA CENTRAL PUBLICATION BRANCH. 1928. PRICE Rs. 2-4, OR 4/- NET.

INTRODUCTION.

The Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India for 1926 has just come to hand. The very brief synopsis given below is extracted from Vol. I of the report which deals with the “Civil” Health; Vol. II is devoted to the Health of the Army in India.—(Editor, I. M. G.)

On the State of the Public Health in British India.

The defects in the system of registration and compilation of vital statistics in India have been commented on ad nauseam in previous reports; but it has also been shown that, provided their limitations are intelligently borne in mind, these vital statistics provide a fairly reliable groundwork of fact on which public health policy may be founded. It need hardly be reiterated that a report such as this, condensing as it