BOOK REVIEWS.

The Selected Writings of William Clowes (1544-1604), edited with Introduction and Notes by F. N. L. Poynter, B.A., F.L.A. Pp. 179. Price 15/- net. London: Harvey & Blythe Ltd. 1948.

William Clowes, whose portrait adorns this book as frontispiece, was one of the leading surgeons in the reign of Elizabeth. A Warwickshire man, he was apprenticed in early youth to George Kebbe, a London surgeon of the Barber-Surgeons' Company which had been chartered in 1518 by Henry VIII. In due course he became a full member of the Company, a lecturer in the Hall, an examiner in surgery and one of the 'Masters of the Mystery' as the heads of the body called themselves. He received the 'Grand Diploma' at the hands of the Bishop of London and so became the equivalent of the modern F.R.C.S. He gained experience in military surgery with our troops in the Low Countries in Leicester's campaign against the Dutch, and of naval surgery as a fleet-surgeon against the Armada. He became consulting surgeon to St. Bartholomew's and surgeon to the Queen.

Clowes, who was ahead of his time, wrote three books; on Syphilis, Surgery and Struma. The one on surgery deals chiefly with gunshot wounds and wartime injuries. His writings Sir Norman Moore described as 'the very best surgical writings of the Elizabethan age.'

In this small well-produced volume we have an adequate introduction to his life and times and 22 extracts from his three books. Clowes was a vivid forthright writer who hated quacks. The language he uses is not the austere dispassionate prose of modern scientific works, but is strongly flavoured with Elizabethan gusto. He has a great tirade against quackery—Blind Buzzards and Cracking Cumbbaters, in which he gives a rich vocabulary full rein. He was eloquent on his profession and a great satirist of the less regular practices of his day. Even in these short passages one gets a glimpse of the life depicted by the great dramatists of the time.

The extracts here printed give his account of how he treated fractures of the limbs; a fractured skull, which he trepanned; gunshot and arrow wounds; syphilis, with comments on disastrous over-treatment with mercury; scurvy, which he cured with fruit and vegetable diet, including watercress; and scrofula, in which disorder he evidently held faith in the Royal touch for obstinate cases.

There is an excellent account of the amputation of a leg, in which he used his own styptic powder to control bleeding, although he also knew of the ligation of blood vessels—indeed makes one of the first references to it in English. He recounts his failures as well as his successes. Of trephining he says that those undertaking it ought indeed to have a lion's heart, a lady's hand and a hawk's eye. He describes the surgeon's chest and the instruments it should contain; the illustrations show some of them to bear a strong resemblance to modern implements.

This book, sponsored by the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, is the first in a new Masters of Medicine series and will interest more than medical historians. It will appeal especially to surgeons, but also to all medical men and to others who may be interested in the fortunes of physic at the time of the English Renaissance.

Recent Advances in Anaesthesia and Analgesia, by C. Langton Hewer, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.P., D.A. 6th edition. Pp. 368. Price 21/- net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1948.

The latest edition of this excellent series, well known to all anaesthetists, maintains the high standard set in the past. The most notable development in anaesthesia since the last edition, has been the introduction of the specific muscle relaxants. A new chapter has been devoted to this group of agents which includes curare and myanesin. Otherwise the general arrangement of the book remains unaltered, although many of the chapters have been enlarged by the inclusion of fresh information. The prophylaxis and treatment of post-operative pulmonary embolism, the skin temperature of the forehead as a sign of shock, and resuscitation by arterial transfusion, are but a few examples of this. All new work and information is completely reviewed, and an extensive list of references is available to all who wish further information on a particular subject. To all anaesthetists this book is invaluable.
Pathological Histology, by Robertson F. Ogilvie, M.D., F.R.C.P.(Edin.), F.R.S.E. 3rd edition. Pp. 459. Price 37/6. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1947.

We welcome the appearance of the third edition of a book which, during the past eight years, has secured an important place in medical literature. All the praise given to Dr. Ogilvie and those associated with him in the production of the book, is well merited. The illustrations are magnificent and these, together with a well-written text, make a most suitable companion to any of the standard textbooks of pathology.

Human Physiology, by F. R. Winton, M.D., D.S.C., and L. E. Bayliss, Ph.D. 3rd edition. Pp. 592. Price 25/-.

The third edition of this work has appeared after an interval of thirteen years. Many of the chapters have been rewritten, and the remainder have been thoroughly revised. New authors have contributed to this work, but the format of the book remains essentially the same.

The book can be recommended as a reliable work, dealing with physiology in its most modern aspects. The whole book is authoritative, and will be of value to medical students and post graduates.

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Treatise on Surgical Infections, by F. L. Meloney, M.D., with numerous illustrations (1 coloured plate). Pp. 713. Price 63/-. London: Oxford University Press (Geoffrey Cumberlege). 1948.

Dr. Meloney, Associate Professor of Clinical Surgery, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, has produced from his wealth of surgical and laboratory experience a fascinating book which should interest practically every medical man. The material has been accumulated over the past twenty years and exemplifies the alteration in surgical outlook brought about by the introduction of the sulphanamides and penicillin. The early chapters, introduced by a brief historical review, indicate the characters of surgical infections and the technique of sterilization and disinfection necessary for their prevention. This is no mere recitation of surgical ritual but a vivid presentation of a wealth of experimental and statistical detail much of it emanating from the author's own work. The next section describes the scope and organisation of a bacteriological service for a surgical clinic and includes a short but valuable section on the associated clinical and laboratory techniques. Then follow a number of chapters on the essential pathology of infection, the entrance of bacteria into the body, their establishment and spread, and, as might be expected from the author's well known work on spreading gangrene, a stimulating account of bacterial synergism and antagonism. The primary and secondary defence mechanisms of the body are then studied in considerable detail. The final chapters deal with treatment under headings which may be condensed into surgery, chemotherapy with a special chapter on zinc peroxide, bacteriophage and finally antibiotics.

To outline a work such as this can never do justice to the evident enthusiasm the author brings to his subject. In his own words his main objects are (1) to maintain high standards of sterile technique, (2) to elucidate the bacteriological problems of surgery, (3) to describe the natural course of surgical infections with and without surgical procedures and their therapeutic aids. He points out that many surgical infections have now come under control but emphasizes that there are still numerous gaps to close, chief among them the problem of mixed infections—so prominent in war wounds, compound fractures and burns. Frank L. Meloney has never himself viewed these gaps with complacency and this illuminating account of his own critical approach to all surgical ritual and his indefatigable efforts by experiment and analysis to reveal deficiencies in technique and to establish every procedure on a firm bacteriological basis shows the ideal, and in fact the only, method of tackling such problems.

The foreword to this book was written by the late Hans Zinsser who emphasizes the value of the clinical laboratory liaison and an appreciative introduction bears the name of Allen O. Whipple.
The Diabetic ABC: A Practical Handbook for Patients and Nurses, by R. D. Lawrence, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. 10th edition. London: H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. 1948.

This book has abundantly proved its usefulness in previous editions. It is packed with advice which is the fruit of a very wide practical experience and continues to give diabetics the information essential to their well-being in terms which the layman can be expected to understand. Unfortunately, however, in his introduction on 'what diabetes is,' the author still fails to bring his explanation into line with modern views on the pathological processes in diabetes. Though not a book for the expert, these matters could as well have been explained with attention to accuracy and surely the author no longer believes that increase in dietary B vitamins will relieve 'diabetic neuritis.'

Enuresis or Bed-wetting, by R. J. Batty, M.D., B.Sc., D.P.H. 2nd edition. Pp. 103. Price 9/6. London: Staples Press Ltd. 1948.

As was brought out by the recent war, nocturnal enuresis is a relatively common condition. The author points out that it is a symptom and that a thorough investigation for physical and psychological factors will often point the way to cure. He gives a historical account of the condition and follows this by an excellent chapter on the anatomy and physiology of micturition. Theories of causation are discussed. The one which suggests that enuresis is due to a suppressed desire to be a fireman is at least original! In treatment, the caudal injection of saline and drugs appears to help many cases. Special enuresis clinics have been found valuable and the author's experience is that they offer at least an 80% chance of improvement.

The Premature Baby, by V. Mary Crosse, O.B.E., M.D., D.P.H., M.M.S.A., D.Obst.R.C.O.G. 2nd edition. Price 12/6. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1949.

The second edition of this well-known little book, which is undoubtedly one of the best accounts of the premature baby available from any country, is in much the same form as its predecessor. In it can be found a thoroughly practical account of the management and care of the premature. Dr. Crosse writes down her own methods as practised at several Birmingham maternity homes. Worthy of special mention are the sections on prevention of infection; nursing care; home care of the premature baby; and methods of feeding. If the routine recommended in these sections is put into practice results well above the average will be obtained even under conditions which are not ideal.

The diseases and injuries commonly encountered in newborn babies also receive attention. The calculations suggested for estimating the fluid requirements of infants suffering from infective diarrhoea would be regarded by many paediatricians as unsound. It is surprising also to find that Dr. Crosse still recommends that breast milk be expressed and boiled before being given to infants with haemolytic disease, and she dismisses replacement transfusion in this disease perhaps rather hastily. These, however, are minor criticisms of a book which reaches the highest standards of excellence.

This book should be in the possession not only of every obstetrician and paediatrician but also of every doctor who is liable to find himself called to advise on the premature or ill newborn baby.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Scotsman's Food, by A. H. Kitchin, M.B., and R. Passmore, M.A., D.M., F.R.S.E. Pp. 86. Price 3/6 net. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1949.

The Structure of Medicine and Its Place among the Sciences, by F. M. R. Walshe, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. Pp. 26. Price 1/6. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1949.