

## Reviews

### OPERATIVE AND LABORATORY OBSTETRICS

*Die Geburtshilfflichen Operationen.* By Professor H. Martius. Sixth edition. (Pp. 287; illustrated. M. 15.60.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme.

*Grefte Ovarienne Intra-oculaire chez la Lapine Castrée: Application au Diagnostic de la Gestation.* By J. Vors. (Pp. 71. No price.) Paris: Vigot Frères.

*Morphologie et Histologie des Corpsprogestatifs et Gestatifs (Corps Jaunes) de l'Ovaire Féminin.* By G. Dubreuil and M. Rivière. (Pp. 102; illustrated. No price.) Paris: Vigot Frères.

Martius's *Obstetrical Operations*, first published in 1934, has now reached its sixth edition, and its popularity is well deserved. In 275 pages, with the help of 281 illustrations, Martius has given a comprehensive description of the art of operative obstetrics. The text is practical and the style is dogmatic, so that the reader is never in doubt of the author's meaning. The subdivisions are excellent, and the arrangement of headings allows the salient features to be picked out without difficulty. The illustrations show Martius's usual judgment and ingenuity, and particular mention must be made of those depicting episiotomy. Although many of the diagrams are copied from old favourites, there is not always acknowledgment; it is well known that obstetrical illustrations are copied from book to book, and it is a matter of regret that the originators of some of the classical diagrams have been forgotten.

Like Pater in his essay on da Vinci, with its subtle emphasis on La Gioconda, Martius contrives to create the same emphasis on forceps delivery, and his description has seldom been equalled. Willet's forceps are mentioned, but there is no recognition of the modern English methods employed in breech delivery. Lovsett's manoeuvre is not described, nor is the Drew Smythe catheter. The German classification of flexed and deflexed vertices has never been favoured in Great Britain, though it is found in the text-book of Jellett and Madill. The practical application of this method should not be completely ignored. It is probable that the work will be translated and published in America, and it is hoped that Martius will incorporate in the next edition the valuable contributions to operative obstetrics which have been made there and in Great Britain.

Grafting of tissues into the anterior chamber of the eye has been practised for many years, and important work has been done with this technique, particularly by Allen and Preist and by Markee. Vors describes in detail the transplantation of a homologous graft from a young rabbit into the anterior chamber of a castrated doe of adult age. The reaction of the graft to injected gonadotrophins can be accurately studied, and the author suggests that the method can be used to replace the Friedman test for the diagnosis of pregnancy. It is possible that the technique will be widely used in the future, and it might be employed to determine the concentration of gonadotrophins in the blood and urine of patients suffering from endocrine diseases.

Dubreuil and Rivière's short publication gives a general account of the histology of the corpus luteum of pregnancy and of the corpus luteum of menstruation. The authors endeavour to distinguish between the two types of corpora lutea in a way which is not altogether convincing. A valuable description of the cystic forms of the corpus luteum of pregnancy is given, and the retrogressive forms

are described with some accuracy. The views of the authors on the colloid bodies are not likely to be accepted by many who have worked on the corpus luteum. The references are good, but it cannot be said that the publication is outstanding.

WILFRED SHAW.

### PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE U.S.A.

*Public Health in the World To-day.* Edited by James S. Simmons. With foreword by James Conant. (Pp. 332. \$5 or £1 7s. 6d.) Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1949.

During 1947-8 a series of public health forums conducted by distinguished guest speakers was added to the regular curriculum of the Harvard School of Public Health. The papers presented at 22 such conferences are reproduced in this book. There is a foreword by the President of Harvard University and an introduction by James Stevens Simmons, who edited the volume.

The book, like the papers on which it is based, is intended primarily for our American colleagues, and it goes without saying that the need it will meet on this side of the Atlantic is entirely different from that in the United States. For the professional reader, or the intelligent non-medical reader in the States, the work provides a readable factual account of many aspects of American public health and its history and objectives—subjects which will obviously attract only a small number of readers here. Were these the only topics discussed, the book's main purpose in England would be to furnish a means of comparing American problems and the American outlook with our own. From this standpoint the English reader will be left in no doubt that there are big differences in matters of detail between the two countries, notwithstanding a close similarity of fundamental outlook. This is instanced by the relatively greater emphasis given in the U.S.A. to statistical researches into the need for medical care, the place of voluntary agencies, and the statistical evaluation of the efficiency of health programmes.

On the other hand, papers from the pens of C. Winslow, Professor Emeritus of Public Health at Yale, Hugh J. Morgan, and Louis I. Dublin—discussing respectively the evolution of public health and its objectives, public health, preventive medicine, and the practising physician, and public health and the diseases of old age—bring out resemblances between the evolution of public health thought, current practical problems, and aspirations for the future of preventive medicine on both sides of the Atlantic.

The topics covered by this stimulating symposium are too diverse to permit of any short summary of their scope, but chapters on subjects like world health, and public health problems connected with aviation and the atomic era, clearly have an interest which transcends national boundaries.

This is not a book which most people will read from cover to cover, at all events in this country. But almost every reader will find sections of great interest—some factual, and others somewhat philosophical. For the Englishman who is already acquainted with the public health services of the United States the book will have a special appeal, as it will also for teachers of preventive and social medicine and for the reader who wishes to have an American account of certain aspects of international medicine. The book should find a place on the shelves of medical libraries because of the facts, ideas, and appraisals it contains.

FRED GRUNDY.