

Reviews

HOMOSEXUALITY

They Stand Apart. A Critical Survey of the Problems of Homosexuality. Edited by His Honour J. Tudor Rees, D.L., J.P., and Harley V. Usill, B.A. Contributors: The Viscount Hailsham, Q.C.; W. Lindesay Neustatter, M.D., B.Sc., M.R.C.P.; H. A. Hammelmann, M.A., D.Phil., LL.D.; and the Rev. D. S. Bailey, Ph.D. (Pp. 220+xii. 21s.) London: William Heinemann Ltd. 1955.

At a time when public attention has been directed to the problems created by the existence in the community of a considerable number of homosexuals, there is need for an impartial and authoritative statement of the facts so far as they are known. The influence of homosexuals as a group, whether they differ from their fellows only in point of sexuality or whether the difference is part of a more generalized failure of normal adaptation in the emotional sphere, has been seen in relation to treason, to the corruption of youth, to character formation in the undergraduate student, and to the recognition of worth in music and the arts, in a series of recent court cases and public controversies. The present pressure of interest has reached the point when a Royal Commission has been formed. It is probable not so much that there are more homosexuals at the moment, but that homosexuality is discussed freely, and homosexual practices, while they give rise to surprise in our generation, are not regarded with such repugnance and prejudice as they have been at other times.

That homosexuals equally with others can make valuable contributions to knowledge and culture is generally agreed, and we are grateful, for instance, for Leonardo da Vinci's gifts to posterity. On the other hand, history shows that more than once the stability of a kingdom has been rocked by a clique of homosexuals, and that such groups, among others, gain ascendancy in times of national decadence. While statutory recognition is needed of the fact that homosexuality may threaten the interests of the community, it is clear that at present the law may often inflict punishment on a type of individual who does not otherwise find himself in conflict with society. The deterrent effect of penal sanctions on such personalities is much open to question. Everyone is entitled to his opinion on this issue, and if his attitude is a civilized one he will wish it to be based on reason and fact rather than on emotion and prejudice. The medical man in particular should know something of the points of view of the Church, the legal profession, and the medical psychologist, and also something of the attitude of other countries and of other times to a problem which has been restated so often.

The contributors to *They Stand Apart* have made a most creditable attempt to place the facts before the responsible reader, and each has made, from the mass of information available to him as a specialist, a sensible summary, while keeping to his own province. The legal aspects are summarized by the senior editor, and this, his last published work, contains a wealth of experience and knowledge. The social aspects are discussed by Viscount Hailsham, and the Christian standpoint is explored by the Rev. D. S. Bailey, study secretary of the Church of England Moral Welfare Council. The medical aspects are admirably dealt with by Dr. Lindesay Neustatter, who presents with remarkable fairness the views of the different schools of thought on the aetiology of homosexuality. It is a pity, in a book which is as well conceived, presented, and edited as this one is, that his section should contain an irritating number of misspellings of proper names and misuses of words; "predisposition" for "predilection," "depravation" for "deprivation," "perpetrate" for "perpetuate," are examples. There are 24 serious errors of the kind which can be eliminated only by a proof-reader who knows something of the author's use of words. These errors mar a section which brings great clarity to a subject of which much loose thinking has been

evident in the psychiatric literature. In particular the writer does not fall into the common error, seen in recent reports, of dismissing female homosexuality as unimportant. In view of the possibility of a change in the law, great interest attaches to an account of the law in other countries given by H. A. Hammelmann. The text is supported by appendices giving statistics and excerpts from parliamentary debates and official reports.

The writers have presented their aspects of the problem in such a way as to be most useful to a citizen inquiring whether the present law should be altered and whether the community should set up some means of dealing with the problems of the maladjusted homosexual and of the protection of youth. The individual contributors achieve a high standard, and the book, which deserves to be widely read, could do much to reduce some of the misunderstanding which exists between the Church, the Law, and Medicine on this subject.

ALEXANDER KENNEDY.

ORTHOPAEDICS FOR STUDENTS

Outline of Orthopaedics. By John Crawford Adams, M.D., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 423+vii; illustrated. 32s. 6d.) Edinburgh and London: E. and S. Livingstone Ltd. 1956.

This textbook is intended primarily for students who wish to read more on this specialty than can be found in a book on general surgery. This type of reader should be well satisfied in finding a well-planned and up-to-date book with adequate descriptions of diseases of the locomotor system and of the immediate and remote effects of many types of injury, excluding fractures. The subject of acute infections of the hand is included. The plan of arrangement is of the "regional surgery" type; thus after a general survey each area, such as shoulder and knee, is dealt with, and the older method of allocating each chapter to a different disease, whatever area it may affect, is discarded. Owing to this the author has found it necessary to provide a number of similar paragraphs in different chapters on such subjects as osteomyelitis and arthritis. Controversies on aetiology and pathology are avoided, and it is stated when the cause of a disease is unknown. The course of a disease such as tuberculosis of a joint is described. The methods of examination and evaluation of physical signs are clearly stated and illustrated, but little stress is laid on the importance of spasm and rigidity. The group of conditions called osteochondritis are well described and the chapter on foot deformities is good. The reader is encouraged to study tables giving information on examinations and on regional disorders. The author has wisely limited details of operative treatment. The omission of rarities, such as pyogenic arthritis of the sterno-clavicular joint and idiopathic steatorrhoea, would direct the student's reading to more important parts of this very useful and well-illustrated volume.

ST. J. D. BUXTON.

GYNAECOLOGY

Textbook of Gynaecology. By J. H. Peel, M.A., B.M., B.Ch., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. Fourth edition. (Pp. 490+xv; illustrated. 27s. 6d.) London: William Heinemann Ltd. 1955.

This well-known student textbook has now reached its fourth edition. True to previous form, it is concise, clearly written, and liberally illustrated. Special features are the sections devoted to symptoms in gynaecology, to general therapeutic measures, to endocrine therapy, to radium and x-ray therapy, to pre- and post-operative management, and to endocrine products available in this country. All student textbooks suffer from the danger of over-simplifying the subject on the one hand, and of confusing the beginner's mind by over-elaboration on the other. Mr. Peel is to be congratulated on steering a safe and sound middle course.

It seems expected of reviewers that in presenting their bouquets they shall include a few thorns with the roses. This churlish practice can be justified only on the analogy