

Reviews

A SURGEON'S ADVICE

The Making of a Surgeon. By Ian Aird. (Pp. 140. 12s. 6d.)
London: Butterworths. 1961.

This book is designed to describe the training required for a career in surgery and the kind of life a young surgeon can expect to lead. It is intended for career masters in schools, for parents of intending medical students, and for the general public, as well as for students and young graduates. Successive chapters deal with the attributes needed by the surgeon, his educational needs at school and university, and his training as a house-surgeon and registrar. The work of a general surgeon is described and there are sections defining the range of work in the different specialties. The final chapter compares the training resources in a number of countries abroad.

Professor Aird has had many years' experience of graduate teaching, so he writes with full knowledge of the needs of a surgeon in training. He writes with vigour and insight and freely mixes sage advice with light anecdote, so the book makes attractive reading and should prove acceptable to those for whom it is intended. Whether he is discussing how to tie a surgical knot or hold a retractor, or the relative importance of anatomy and physiology, or the desirability of foreign travel, he contrives to present the subject in a way equally attractive to the lay reader and the medical man.

Just occasionally his lively wit lets him down. The story recounted on page 1 was put more pithily by *Punch* 30 years ago. The half-serious analysis of surgeons' hobbies seems unlikely to have any real basis, while the advice against early marriage does little credit to the help and encouragement offered by many young registrars' wives.

But these are trivial criticisms. A more serious cause for regret is that so much is said about the opportunities for surgical training in London and so little about the rest of the country. It is perhaps natural that Professor Aird's field of vision should be restricted to the Hammersmith-Holborn axis, but after a chapter devoted to India, Pakistan, Ceylon, South Africa, Japan, and the rest of the world he might have spared a few sentences for the English provincial centres and the medical schools in Scotland and Northern Ireland, where most British surgeons receive the greater part of their training.

CHARLES ILLINGWORTH.

BRAIN DAMAGE AND APHASIA

Traumatic Aphasia. A Study of Aphasia in War Wounds of the Brain. By W. Ritchie Russell, C.B.E., M.D.(Edin.), D.Sc.(Oxon.), F.R.C.P.(Edin. and Lond.), and M. L. E. Espir, M.A., M.B., B.Chir., M.R.C.P.(Lond.). (Pp. 177; illustrated. 38s.) London: Oxford University Press. 1961.

Boldness and sincerity must fortify the neurologist who to-day ventures to grasp the nettle of aphasia. The complexities of this subject demand either a critical detachment or else an entirely novel approach. There is, however, a third justification for reopening the topic of language disorder—namely, the possession of a weighty accumulation of relevant case-material. Hence the impetus to the study of aphasia which accrued from each of the two world wars. Marie and Foix, Goldstein, and Henry Head in particular owed much to their

experiences between 1914 and 1918. The contributions of Conrad and Bay in Germany and of Luria in the U.S.S.R. have largely been inspired by their researches after the second world war.

The present monograph is to be regarded not so much as a linguistic study of the nature of aphasia as a consideration of aphasia as a focal outfall symptom of brain-damage. Ritchie Russell and Espir have been enabled to profit from an impressive series of 255 cases of penetrating wounds of the skull associated with aphasia. In each case they were able to make an estimate—even if approximate at times—as to the likely nodal point of the lesion. The authors have been able to study the relationship of speech-loss to the processes of memory-storage as well as to other general features of the organization and functioning of the nervous system. The maintenance of old memories is one mechanism, the acquisition of new ones is another. With such valuable evidence at their disposal the authors have naturally been in a position to explore the interesting question of the correlation of aphasia with cerebral dominance. An important comparison of aphasic patterns in alleged sinistrals has been possible in cases of right, as opposed to left, cerebral lesions. This monograph by Ritchie Russell and Espir is therefore very significant in the literature of neurology as well as in the pathology of speech.

MACDONALD CRITCHLEY.

BOYD'S PATHOLOGY

A Textbook of Pathology. An Introduction to Medicine. By William Boyd, M.D., Dipl. Psychiat., M.R.C.P.(Edin.), Hon.F.R.C.P.(Edin.), F.R.C.P.(Lond.), F.R.C.S.(Can.), F.R.S.(Can.), LL.D.(Sask.), (Queen's), D.Sc.(Man.), M.D.(Oslo). Seventh edition. (Pp. 1,370; illustrated. £6 6s.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1961.

Boyd's Textbook is known, of course, to most of us as an old friend. Indeed, some of us have grown up with its seven editions. Of its popularity with our own students—and, it would seem, with medical students in many countries—there can be no doubt. After a somewhat shaky start, when there was a slight suspicion that rhetoric might run away with the author's facile pen, *Boyd* has come into its own. Now it is a well-balanced and charmingly written introduction to the discipline and applications of pathology that has earned the respect of teachers throughout the world.

But there is something more to the latest edition than the elegant craftsmanship of a highly experienced writer. One senses in its numerous masterly chapters an air of mellowed wisdom that has swung the mind and imagination of the author more and more to the general principles that govern disease processes and compelled him to think more deeply about the challenge of disturbed function. It is not without significance that Professor Boyd writes in his preface a pregnant sentence of the youthful Rudolf Virchow: "Pathological physiology is the main fortress of medicine, while pathological anatomy and the clinic are outlying bastions."

The thirteen-hundred-odd pages of *Boyd's Textbook* erect a splendid monument to Virchow's insight, a monument that has been refurbished up and polished against a background of modern research which reflects so much of what we have learnt, in recent years, from the geneticist, immunologist, and, above all, the biochemist. Professor Boyd is alert to all that our colleagues have to offer. Nevertheless, being a born teacher, he selects his material with skill and proper