

perpetuate the recognition of the work of Claud Worth is a generous compliment on his part. This new book is a portentous production, very different from Worth's own first edition. But times have changed, and many workers have developed the subject which he helped to explore. Chavasse points out that there is now a new conception of the binocular reflexes and of their development, a new pathology, in which all varieties of squint appear as perversions or subversions of the normal binocular reflexes due to various obstacles operative during the developmental period and after. The effects of this new pathology on diagnosis and treatment may be disconcerting to those who have followed Javal and Worth—despite their written warnings—with more enthusiasm than intelligence.

The book is divided into sections. First comes one on the foundations of binocular reactions. This is graphic and entertaining. There follow sections on development, on anomalies, on diagnosis, on treatment, and on the technique of certain operations. Thus a complete survey is given, on which the author is to be congratulated. If a suggestion may be made it is that the illustrations, which are numerous and are necessarily important in such a volume, are too crowded. On one page (p. 509) there are no fewer than forty-five photographs in a space 4 by 2 inches, and the effort needed to dissociate these pictures is such that the reader neglects them. Again, on page 619 there are fifteen photographs of the steps in an operation, and individual pictures cannot be properly appreciated unless the others are blotted out. Photographs of operations, even when properly spaced, are of doubtful value as compared with well-drawn diagrams. These are matters which the author might reconsider in a future edition. Taken as a whole, however, this work is one which will without doubt attract the attention of all ophthalmic surgeons.

### THE BRITANNICA YEARBOOK

*Encyclopaedia Britannica Book of the Year 1939.* (Pp. 760; illustrated. 45s. net.) London: Encyclopaedia Britannica Co., Ltd. 1939.

Whatever doubts anyone may have had about the wisdom of publishing a yearbook of the dimensions and scope of the volume issued by the Encyclopaedia Britannica have probably now disappeared. The first volume was published last year. In the first place, the start of the new venture was a success. In the second, the pace of events, set perhaps by the astonishing facilities of modern communication and modern transport, makes it increasingly difficult for the ordinary slow-moving democrat to keep up to date. Time has gone totalitarian, and seems to set at nought our neat division of the calendar into days, weeks, and months. Nowadays things happen with indecent speed.

Medical matters are brought before the public by a distinguished team of contributors. Sir Arthur Hurst, for instance, in discussing intestinal auto-intoxication utters a most useful warning to the lay reader when he writes: "Intestinal lavage for a hypothetical poisoning from the bowel is almost equally harmful [as the diarrhoea caused by purgatives], and it has the additional ill effect of making a patient, often already too introspective, still more hypochondriacal." Contact lenses, child welfare, cancer, chemotherapy, public health services, and a useful article on hospitals by Sir Henry Brackenbury are among some of the medical items of exceptional interest. The sections on "mental diseases" and "nervous diseases" might in future editions be included under the one heading of "psychiatry," and the example of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* itself might be followed by including at the

end of an article cross-references to related subjects—for example, see also psychology, psycho-analysis, psychiatry.

The illustrations to the yearbook are uniformly excellent and in themselves often an eloquent comment on events recently current. The Palace of the League of Nations—looking very handsome and very isolated—is suitably shown as it looks from the air. Altogether, the *Book of the Year 1939* has more than justified the new venture, and the editor is to be congratulated on a fine piece of work: among much else that is excellent we welcome "Diary of Events" at the beginning of the volume—from January 1, 1938, to January 31, 1939.

### Notes on Books

Sir EDWARD MELLANBY'S Harveian Oration on "The State and Medical Research," which appeared in an abridged form in the *British Medical Journal* of October 22, 1938 (p. 821), has now been published in full (Oliver and Boyd Ltd., 3s. 6d.). A clear and detailed account is given of the part played by the State in the promotion of medical research since the creation of the Medical Research Committee in 1913. As to the future, Sir Edward Mellanby writes: "The difficulty I foresee is not that of obtaining knowledge but of its application to human needs."

In *La Mort des Brûlés : Étude Expérimentale* Dr. LOUIS CHRISTOPHE (Paris: Masson et Cie, 40 fr.) has brought forward experimental evidence that tonic products are formed in areas of the skin which have been burnt. These products produce their lethal effects by causing pathological changes in those nuclei of the hypothalamus which control certain aspects of vegetative function. He attributes the general clinical phenomena which follow burns to this disturbance of autonomic activity.

GUSTAVE ROUSSY'S *Le Cancer* is published in Paris by Armand Colin at 15 fr.; bound, 17.50 fr. This small book, by a distinguished French pathologist, is not intended for the specialist and is too technical for the layman, but the general medical reader will find in it a concise summary of current knowledge of the structure, clinical manifestations, and treatment of cancers as well as a guide to laboratory investigations and a moderate discussion of their significance. The information is reliable, and, for the most part, up to date. It is questionable whether some of the recent work—for example, laboratory investigations on heredity—is made intelligible to those unfamiliar with the subject; on the other hand, some sections seem unnecessarily elementary. In the main, however, the compression of a wealth of material has been well carried out, and only the most erudite readers will fail to increase their knowledge of some aspect of cancer; it is the more regrettable, therefore, that a good bibliography is not provided.

Few teachers have been able to inspire both affection and respect in their pupils. Boerhaave in Holland, Babington in London, and Osler, both in America and in England, are notable instances; Harvey Cushing may fairly be placed among them. His seventieth birthday was celebrated with great éclat, and, like his recent visit to receive an honorary degree from the University of Oxford, was made the opportunity to show the place he occupied in the hearts of his many pupils. The bibliography of his writings is a lasting token of their regard. It is published in a limited issue by "The Harvey Cushing Society," which consists of fifty members. Dr. Arnold Klebs writes an excellent introduction and describes the book as a humanized bibliography. Cushing's life history from 1869 with his numerous degrees and the honours which have fallen

to him are given in full. There is a satisfactory bibliography of the 658 items which he has contributed in the form of books, monographs, addresses, and papers from clinics and laboratories. These are followed by appendices and a subject index. But the end is not yet; Cushing is young at 70, and much valuable work is still expected from the maker of cerebral surgery, who is at last enjoying some well-earned leisure. There is an excellent portrait of him in his library, and the foreword and final page contain details of the agreeable format and printing of the book.

*The Genuine Works of Hippocrates* (Baillière, Tindall and Cox: 13s. 6d.) is a reprint of the well-known English translation of the works of Hippocrates made by Francis Adams, LL.D., a family practitioner, during professional journeys to his patients in the neighbourhood of Banchory in Scotland. It was published by the Old Sydenham Society in two volumes in 1849, and was reprinted in 1886 and 1929. The present issue is printed in America. Dr. Emerson Crosby Kelly, writing the introduction, states that "the numerous and extensive footnotes made by Adams have been deleted, and a continuous and connected picture of medicine in the Golden Age of Greece is the result."

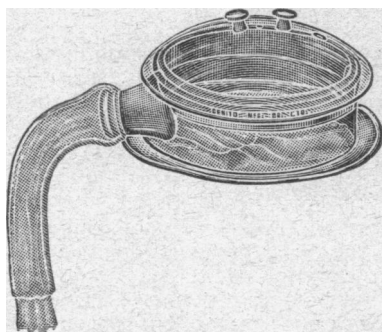
Dr. M. M. FERRAND'S thesis (*Thèse de Paris*, 1939, No. 181) on Marcel Proust shows that this remarkable writer was the subject of asthma from the age of 9 as well as of hay fever, and suffered from obstinate insomnia. His condition was aggravated by his sedentary life, lack of any exercise or fresh air, and the abuse of veronal, caffeine, and other drugs.

## Preparations and Appliances

### WICK DRAINAGE FROM SUPRAPUBIC BOX

Mr. HAMILTON BAILEY, F.R.C.S. (London, W.1), writes:

I found that the wick drainage of suprapubic cystostomy wounds, as described by Thompson and Wright (*J. Urol.*, 1937, 37, 721) was extremely effective. Briefly, a large piece of sterile gauze is placed within a length of Paul's soft tubing, one end of the wick being inserted into the suprapubic wound and the other into a sterile bottle beside the bed. Capillary attraction takes away the urine as fast as it is excreted, in the same way as lamp-wick delivers oil to the flame.

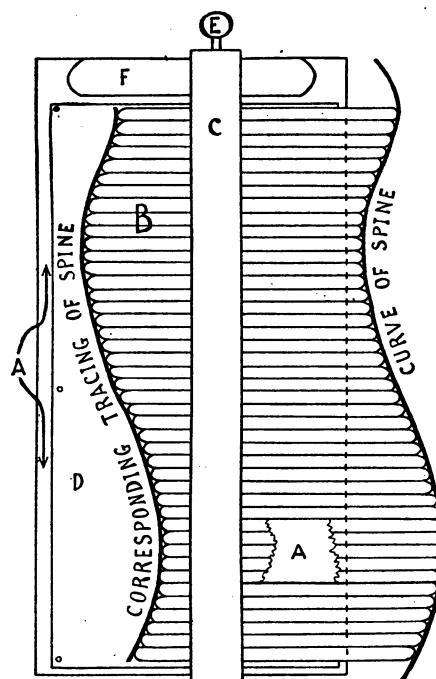


Thompson and Wright complete the dressing by making a ring of kaolin and petroleum jelly round the suprapubic sinus. This works well if the patient keeps still, but in practice to keep still is irksome. By modifying Macdonald's well-known suprapubic box to take the proximal end of the wick in the manner shown in the above figure, the advantages of a wick and the stability of a suprapubic box can be combined.

### RECORDING SPINAL CURVATURE

Dr. GEOFFREY C. PETHER (Buxton) writes:

A simple piece of apparatus is being made to my design in the Devonshire Royal Hospital, Buxton. On a previous occasion the use of a strip of malleable lead for recording the progress made in the treatment of a case of ankylosing spondylitis was described. This strip was moulded to the spine on successive occasions and tracings were then made from it on a sheet of paper. As this method was somewhat clumsy an improvement has been devised. A plank of wood (A) about 4 feet by 2 feet is used as a foundation. This is attached by its long side to the wall or to an upright post if convenient. A series of wooden slats (B) about 1 foot by



1 inch by 1/2 inch are placed side by side from one end of the foundation piece to the other, their long axes being at right angles to the long axis of the foundation plank. These slats are provided with small projections at either end and on their outer surface. They prevent the slats from slipping from under a rigid spar (C), which is fixed to the foundation piece above and below so as to be in contact with the front surfaces of the slats, the foundation plank being behind them. This spar should be about 4 inches wide and fixed a little off centre on the foundation plank, though vertical. The slats will thus be able to project for 4 to 5 inches to one side of the foundation plank, though not beyond the other. This other side, which may be termed the near side, is used as a support for the record paper (D), which resembles that used in the older recording system. This paper should be secured above and below on the surface of the foundation plank, the near ends of the slats lying over it.

When a record of the shape of the spine is to be made the patient should stand with his back in line with the outer ends of the slats. These are then pushed one by one towards him until all are in contact with his skin by their outer ends. The slats are then held firmly in position by applying a few turns to a thumb-screw (E), which is attached to a long and narrow face-piece (F) lying in contact with the upper slat. This manoeuvre compresses them from above downwards and holds them tightly in position. When all are firmly held the positions of the near ends of the slats are marked off with a pencil on the recording paper. The curve thus obtained is identical with that formed by the outer ends of the slats, which are in contact with the patient's spine. Several successive records may be made on the same paper for comparative purposes. The curves recorded extend from the upper occipital protuberance to the mid-sacrum.