

## Reviews

### BILIARY DISEASES

*Diseases of the Gallbladder and Bile Ducts.* By Waltman Walters, M.D., ScD., F.A.C.S., and Albert M. Snell, M.D., F.A.C.P. (Pp. 645; 342 illustrations on 195 figures. 50s. net.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1940.

This book, with the weight of experience of the Mayo Clinic behind it, written by the heads of the surgical and medical divisions of the clinic, assisted by specialists, demands and will receive respect for the outstanding manner in which it deals with the problems of diseases of the gall-bladder and biliary ducts. Short chapters on the anatomy, physiology, and pathology of the biliary system—nearly thirty thousand gall-bladders removed surgically have been studied in laboratories of the Mayo Clinic—are followed by a discussion of the live topic of the relation of cholecystitis to gall-stones. In the view of the authors no form of cholecystic disease, gall-stones in particular, appears as a primary disorder; there must be an initial injury to the structure and function of the gall-bladder, which in turn may develop to the point of complete functional incapacity, formation of stone, or a state of chronic infection, and these may be combined. Initial injury may follow infection, disturbed cholesterol metabolism, or mechanical and toxic factors, and the typical stone-bearing, functionless, and infected gall-bladder may have arrived at its condition by one of several routes. The mechanism of formation probably varies with the type of stone, and no one hypothesis fits all the observed phenomena. Diseases of the gall-bladder should be studied in correlation with conditions in the stomach, duodenum, and remainder of the alimentary tract, and "in all probability are secondary organic manifestations of what might be called constitutional deficiencies." Diagnostic methods are described, and at the close of an instructive chapter on cholecystography Dr. Kirklin concludes that this is one of the most trustworthy tests at the service of the clinician.

In about 250 pages there is an admirable and well-illustrated account of the symptoms and clinical course of the diseases with which the book deals: cholecystitis, acute, chronic, and calculous; tumours of the gall-bladder and bile ducts; jaundice, cholangitis, and stone in the ducts. The authors are wrong, however, in saying that in pancreatitis the lipoid material in the stools is predominantly neutral fat rather than fatty acids (p. 332). Medical measures in treatment are not put forward with much enthusiasm. It may be that the experience of chronic and long-standing disease presenting itself at the Mayo Clinic after some amount of treatment leads to a surgical bias. Medical treatment has in view the overcoming of stasis in the gall-bladder and bile passages, the control of infection, and the relief of the reflex dyspeptic symptoms which so commonly are associated with stones. No one diet is likely to suit all patients, the caloric value must be adjusted to needs, but in general it should be non-irritating, with frequent small meals, of which the fat content is adjusted to the individual. Drugs and fatty foods may tend to cause relaxation of the sphincter of the common duct and favour evacuation of the gall-bladder, bile salts may promote choleresis, while alkalis and carminatives may relieve the associated reflex dyspepsia.

In regard to surgery the criteria for the diagnosis of cholecystic disease in general are essentially the same features which must be reviewed when the question of operation is to be decided. These are "a satisfactory account of biliary colic or of recurrent painful abdominal seizures resembling colic; residual tenderness in the region of the gall-bladder, or a palpable gall-bladder, following such attacks; persistent, intractable dyspepsia not relieved by ordinary measures; cholecystographic evidence of loss of function of the gall-bladder, or of the presence of stones, and exclusion of conditions which simulate cholecystitis." The surgical principles and details of operative procedure are described and illustrated elaborately, special emphasis being placed on pre- and post-operative methods and the symptoms which arise after cholecystectomy and in the presence of jaundice. No one available test of hepatic function is infallible, nor can the impression gained by careful clinical study be superseded, but the level of serum bilirubin does give information of value: a high value (20 mg. per 100 c.cm. or more) is a danger signal not to be disregarded. Long views may also be taken in advocating removal of the diseased gall-bladder when the favourable effect on associated vascular disease and the prevention of cancer arising in an organ subject to chronic irritation are kept in mind.

This is a stimulating and satisfactory book, broad in outlook and clear in statement. It is produced with all the sumptuousness of the well-known publishing house of W. B. Saunders.

### SIR JAMES FRAZER, O.M., F.R.S.

*James George Frazer. The Portrait of a Scholar.* By R. Angus Downie. (Pp. 141. 5s. net.) London: Watts and Co.

Just half a century ago the literary world was startled by the publication of *The Golden Bough*; it was recognized as a portent of an era of thought as new as that provided by Darwin thirty years previously. The attraction of its matter was enhanced by the charm of its manner; new ideas were clothed in beautiful scholarly prose. The influence of those ideas has now spread so widely that it must be difficult for a later generation to realize that it aroused feelings akin to those excited in Keats by Chapman's *Homer*. What of its author—J. G. Frazer, that recluse Fellow of Trinity? Mr. Angus Downie, his sometime secretary and fervent admirer, is able to tell us. Frazer drew his inspiration from three sources—a Scottish home steeped in the literature of the Bible, a sound classical training at Glasgow, and at Cambridge the close friendship of the famous Robertson Smith, who had escaped from heresy-hunters into the haven of Christ's College. It was, however, Tylor's *Primitive Culture* which first turned his attention to anthropology. He found that the comparative method applied to religion soon enforced the conclusion that the course of its evolution has been, up to a certain point, very similar among all men. He did not deny the diffusion of culture, but attached more importance to psychological factors than did Elliot Smith; in effect his conception was not unlike that of Jung's collective unconscious. In *Psyche's Task* (1909) he demonstrated that among certain races and at certain times superstition had strengthened the respect for government, civil order, private property, and marriage—and lastly for human life, thereby contributing to the security of its enjoyment. But he had recognized also that at some stages of social evolution the supreme power tends to fall into the hands

of men of the keenest intelligence and the most unscrupulous character. Yet he has a good word to say for them, and thinks that more mischief has probably been wrought in the world by honest fools in high places than by intelligent rascals, for once the shrewd rogue has attained the height of his ambition he may, and often does, turn his talents to the service of the public. Written fifty years ago, these words have a new and painful interest to-day.

The legend of "The priest who slew the slayer" has captivated the imagination of almost every schoolboy, and is shown by Frazer to lie at the root of much unconscious imaginings. His researches provided a collection of facts and interpretations of great value to Freud, although his point of view was widely different. Indeed, as time goes on it becomes increasingly clear how much Freud owes to Frazer.

It is impossible even to allude to all his many other literary activities. In addition to stimulating thought he has enriched us with pen pictures of surpassing beauty, such as those of Lake Nemi and of Hymettus. His study of Ovid's *Fasti* is a serious contribution to classical learning, his imitations of eighteenth-century writers have deceived the very elect, while his poetry has the authentic ring. Loaded with honours, he remains at the ripe age of 86 the same modest, gentle, retiring spirit he has always been. As A. E. Housman, that severe critic, said in the course of an admirable appreciation, "The forgotten milestones of the road which man has travelled, the mazes and blind alleys of his appointed progress through time, are illuminated by your art and genius."

To those who would know more of the personality and work of this remarkable man we can cordially recommend the lucid and attractive account given in the pages of this book. But from the last clause of the author's statement that at Cambridge "his reputation is respected, his person revered, and his works ignored" we must register emphatic dissent from personal knowledge.

### FRACTURES OF THE JAWS

*Theory and Treatment of Fractures of the Jaws in Peace and War.* By Horace Hayman Boyle, H.D.D. and L.D.S. (Pp. 288; 127 illustrations. 21s. net.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1940.

On opening this book one is confronted with what at first sight appears to be the design for a stained glass window of one of the saints. Closer examination, however, shows that this is merely a schematic drawing including a circle suggestive of a halo, but so placed that the biting surfaces of the teeth lie on its circumference. From a rather long preface, which may be of more interest to dentists than to surgeons, the fact emerges that the author holds that the jaw is a mill and not a lever. The importance of a mastery of the problems relating to jaw fractures on the part of those entrusted with the care of war wounds of the face and jaws is obvious, and this book is an attempt on the part of its author to enunciate and consider these problems in detail. Illustrations are plentiful and consist of photographs and line drawings well reproduced on highly glazed paper which, owing to the shine to which it gives rise, makes difficult reading, however, when it comes to following the text in artificial light. To the busy surgeon, concerned only with restoration of function with as nearly perfect an anatomical result as possible, much of this work will appear unnecessarily detailed and aiming at a mathematical precision so meticulous as to approach the absurd or the uneconomical. This is particularly the case when one considers the wonderfully compensating mechanism which Nature so often brings into operation,

so that after division of the motor root of one trigeminal nerve the effect on jaw movements and bite is often only detectable with difficulty. To dentists there is no doubt much in this book which is controversial and worthy of study; but this aspect is beyond the scope of the reviewer, who, like many of his surgical colleagues, is only too glad of the collaboration of a dental surgeon in dealing with maxillary or mandibular fractures but to whom the details of dental prosthetics are of little concern. In any case these are beyond the ambit of most surgeons and practitioners of medicine.

### TOMOGRAPHY

*Tomography.* By J. B. McDougall, M.D. Glasg., F.R.C.P.Ed., F.R.S.Ed. (Pp. 73; 110 illustrations. 21s. net.) London: H. K. Lewis and Co., Ltd. 1940.

In his monograph on tomography Dr. J. B. McDougall has had as his main object to present, to chest physicians in particular, a representative group of tomograms. In this he has succeeded very well. The book begins with a clear account of the principles and technique of tomography, and although the author's work has all been done with the elaborate and extremely efficient (and expensive!) apparatus made by the firm of "Sanitas," he points out how tomograms of a comparable quality may be produced by the inexpensive attachment to an ordinary Bucky couch devised by the late E. W. Twining.

The main part of the book is occupied by a beautiful series of radiographs and tomograms showing the value of tomography in the investigation of pulmonary tuberculosis. These have been well chosen, the legends are explicit, and the illustrations of a high quality. The author makes out a very good case for the use of tomography in the study of pulmonary tuberculosis in its various stages—and also when artificial pneumothorax or thoracoplasty has been performed. In the later pages he points out its use in carcinomatous bronchostenosis and lung abscess and in certain conditions in the skull.

This monograph, the work of one of the pioneers of tomography in this country, will well repay study by all interested in thoracic medicine.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES

*Clinical Practice in Infectious Diseases. For Students, Practitioners and Medical Officers.* By E. H. R. Harries, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H., and M. Mitman, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.M.R.E. With a foreword by W. Allen Daley, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Pp. 468. 17s. 6d., plus 7d. postage.) Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone. 1940.

For the last five years or so it has been increasingly felt that the newer knowledge and practice of infectious diseases should be incorporated in a comprehensive textbook. This need has now been met by the production, within the modest dimensions of this new work, of an astonishingly complete conspectus of the subject. The common infectious diseases, together with the newer methods of control and treatment, are set out attractively in their new groupings—for example, the haemolytic streptococcal fevers. Concise accounts are also given of such allied conditions as gastro-enteritis of infants, glandular fever, undulant fever, psittacosis, epidemic louse-borne diseases, tetanus.

A preliminary section of ninety pages gives an account of principles of infection, resistance, allergy, general management, rashes, diet, and other general matters. This is a good arrangement in that it avoids repetition, but the inexperienced reader may well find this abstract treatment of the subject somewhat difficult to grasp, and should not follow too literally the authors' advice to