

65 and 85 when at rest by giving 5 to 6 granules a week and by watching carefully for signs of over- or under-dosage.

She remained well and was able to continue with her household and dairy duties until dropsy of cardiac type intervened in Feb., 1936. This was cleared by means of rest in bed, salt-free diet, and diuretin gr. 15 thrice daily, but it returned quickly in spite of perseverance with the treatment. It was, however, delayed in its severity until the end of May, when she was so badly swollen and so miserable as to necessitate her being kept sitting up in bed resting forward on her thighs. The oedema was extreme, and the end would appear to be not long delayed. Opiates were given for her relief, and had to be administered by mouth as she lived seven miles away. On May 30 I gave her 20 gr. of ammonium chloride to take in a mixture thrice daily, and on June 3 she received 1 c.cm. of salyrgan intramuscularly into the buttock. The diuresis was moderately profuse. On alternate days 1 c.cm. was continued, and with caution, for two more doses. On the fourth occasion 2 c.cm. was given—the ammonium chloride being also given, as before.

By June 24 she had received salyrgan thrice weekly in 2-c.cm. doses and the oedema had disappeared. The urinary output was examined, and always has been, at each visit. I found it necessary to continue thrice-weekly injection until Dec. 2. By that time it was considered necessary to give it only twice weekly. She had been allowed up gradually in August, until she was able to do her housework over eight hours daily, and has continued to do this ever since. From Dec. 5, 1936, to July 27, 1942, 2 c.cm. of salyrgan or mersalyl (B.D.H.) was given twice weekly with few exceptions.

The patient at this date decided to "retire" from active work and live more leisurely. Since then 2 c.cm. given weekly, and with occasional extra doses, has kept her oedema-free, except for a slight puffiness of the feet and lower legs. Altogether she has now had 680 injections—all but a very few being of 2 c.cm.

COMMENT

The only toxic symptoms that might be ascribed to mercury have been: (1) A "soapy" feeling in the mouth. This is almost constant, but there has never been any sign of stomatitis. The patient wears dentures, and so oral sepsis has not been present to help induce the condition. (2) Three slight attacks of catarrhal colitis have occurred, each lasting two to four days and each signified by gripping pains on the left side of the abdomen and by tenesmus, with the passage of mucus usually tinged with blood. These attacks responded quickly to withdrawal of the diuretic for a week and the administration of 10 gr. of Dover's powder thrice daily for a few days along with a roughage-free diet.

There have been no signs of neuritis—her deep reflexes being maintained, in addition to there being complete absence of paraesthesia and tremor or of any mental disturbance or drowsiness. She has had frequent severe cramps in her legs about 48 hours after an injection. These were most marked when she was on a salt-free diet. When returned to a normal salt-containing diet these attacks became infrequent, and since receiving her injection once weekly have been altogether absent. It was noticed that it was wiser to allow a slight pitting of the ankles to remain at all times to prevent too much dehydration. These cramps are of the nature of stoker's cramp. The kidneys have shown no evidences of increased impairment over these years. The amount of albuminuria from passive congestion seldom exceeds 0.1%, and only an occasional hyaline or granular cast is found. Haematuria has been absent. Nausea has been complained of from time to time, but is usually attributable to the ammonium chloride, which, however, is required in this case as the diuresis is about halved without it. On rare occasions the nausea has been due to the onset of digitalis sickness.

It is interesting to note that the patient has at no time suffered from any signs of thrombosis—either arterial or venous. Of course her arteries are ideal, being free from obvious arteriosclerotic changes and probably from atheroma. Also no local reactions have occurred.

CONCLUSIONS

It would appear that there is little risk of any untoward symptoms of mercurialism arising from the prolonged administration of salyrgan or mersalyl (B.D.H.) even when given at such short intervals in cardiac dropsy, provided that elimination is not impaired by renal disease and that oral sepsis is not present.

There would seem to be no danger, or little danger, of thrombosis occurring provided that the blood vessels are reasonably healthy.

Cramps may be avoided after injection by giving sufficient salt in the diet and by avoidance of over-dehydration.

No local reactions should occur if injection is given deeply and with a dry needle.

It is worth while to institute treatment even when the patient is apparently *in extremis*, as many years of moderately active life may be enjoyed.

C. M. McINTYRE, M.B., Ch.B.,
Highlands and Islands Medical Service.

Bridgend, Isle of Islay.

Reviews

A TEXTBOOK OF MIDWIFERY

Textbook of Midwifery. By Wilfred Shaw, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. (Pp. 588; illustrated. 21s.) London: J. and A. Churchill. 1943.

It is perhaps natural that students should encourage a popular teacher to write a textbook on the subject he teaches. It is certainly a good thing that not all such encouragement bears fruit in the shape of new textbooks on this and that, for unless each has a real contribution to make it has no valid excuse for its existence. There is nothing revolutionary in Mr. Wilfred Shaw's new work and little to distinguish it from other textbooks on midwifery, but none the less it is assured of a general welcome, for its earlier and sister volume on gynaecology has given the author a well-earned reputation as a teacher which extends far beyond the bounds of St. Bartholomew's and its students.

Mr. Shaw's obstetrical teaching is based on three sound principles. The first is that the majority of women deliver themselves spontaneously without much trouble; the second is that great clinical judgment is required to decide if and when interference is indicated; the third is that if any obstetrical manipulation is carried out it calls for dexterity and operative skill of a very high order. As would be imagined from these the practice of midwifery has been described largely from a practical and clinical basis. The book is introduced by a chapter which the author states is intended to illustrate his attitude to the practice of midwifery. It is a creed based on genes, meiosis, and the blastopore, and the student may have to read it more than once before he understands its meaning. If he does need to do so he will not be the loser, because he will begin his studies with the oft-repeated assurance fresh in his mind that unnecessary interference is the greatest sin in obstetrical practice.

The book is arranged on conventional lines. There are eight sections dealing with physiology of reproduction, clinical midwifery, complications of pregnancy, abnormal labour, abnormalities of the amnion, placenta, umbilical cord and foetus, management and diseases of the newborn, operative midwifery, and results and statistics. Excellent illustrations are distributed throughout. A minor criticism is that here and there the reader is left wondering what Mr. Shaw believes and practises. Unless this practice is made clear it is of little help to the student to be told that some authorities advise episiotomy in breech deliveries or that many obstetricians have no anxiety in performing a Caesarean section after a surgical induction of labour by means of the Drew-Smythe catheter, to quote only two examples. Dogmatic teaching is often dangerous, but it is less so in clinical medicine than are the vague utterances of the academic tutor. The student must learn how he is to handle clinical problems when they arrive, and he can measure the value of his teacher's dogma by the results he achieves.

Considerable emphasis is given to radiological examination of the pelvis—even, some would think, at the expense of instruction on when and how to examine a pelvis clinically. True, it is admitted that "there is much to be said for the old-fashioned vaginal examination by an experienced obstetrician," and it is also admitted that perhaps radiological methods may lead to unnecessary interference. On the other hand the student is informed that radiography is the only scientific method of pelvic measurement without being reminded that obstetrics is an art and not a science. He is taught that a floating head is always an indication of disproportion, and one finds it difficult to reconcile this with either fact or the principles so clearly defined in the introduction. If the student believes that the high head always indicates disproportion and that the only scientific means of investigating the pelvis is by radiography, then the stage is set for interference, and plenty of it. The discussion on the treatment of lesser degrees of disproportion includes an excellent account of trial of labour. Many of Wilfred Shaw's colleagues will disagree with his views on the methods of terminating pregnancy. To advise abdominal hysterotomy from the 12th to 18th week and vaginal manipulation from the 18th to 28th week, when the uterus is notoriously inert, is strange indeed. A surprising

omission is the lack of reference to the importance of the Rh factor in obstetrics.

Major place in this review has been given to criticisms which for the most part are levelled against details in the text. We venture to prophesy that the next edition of this book will be considerably revised and correspondingly improved.

AUTHORITY IN MEDICINE

Authority in Medicine: Old and New. By Major Greenwood, D.Sc., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. The Linacre Lecture, May 6, 1943. (Pp. 32. 1s. 6d.) Cambridge: The University Press, 1943.

Though Linacre's name is venerated his memory is but shadowy. Nevertheless when Prof. Topley said of him in the Linacre Lecture for 1940 that "the only reason he did not do more harm than he did was because the times were too much for him" the audience were mildly shocked; the offence in Prof. Topley's eyes being that Linacre's object was to diffuse accurate knowledge of the ancient treatises, especially of Galen, which would merely put "a brighter polish on the fetters that hold medicine in thrall"; in other words, an authoritarian wished to impose a still older authority on us. Prof. Major Greenwood in his Linacre Lecture for 1943, on "Authority in Medicine: Old and New," questions the justice of this criticism, and starts by going back to Galen himself, who was "almost comically unlike one's idea of an oracle or a prophet," though, like the Hebrew prophets, he had "an extremely low opinion of most of his contemporaries and an immense command of the vocabulary of vituperation . . . he was for ever giving reasons, he was sometimes witty, often abusive, but always arguing." His views on hygiene were sound, his medical psychology was in advance of his age. There was in Linacre's day "a Galenical faith, just as there is now a Marxian faith, and medical students at the end of the fifteenth century were no more familiar with the works of Galen than young English sectaries of Marx with his opinions; probably less." It is not Galen who should be blamed, but the misuse made of his writings in an age when, largely due to ecclesiastical influence, the spirit of authority was supreme. It is the fate of great teachers to start as revolutionaries and to become the idol of reactionaries.

Authority there must be; the medical curriculum, lengthy as it is, would be inordinately prolonged "if every student verified experimentally textbook statements." With us a special authority attaches to the experimental method, but we may overrate its logical value. In one respect there is a change: biologists no longer despise the statistical method, which both these lecturers introduced into epidemiology. This enables Prof. Greenwood to give us an astonishing and rather consoling piece of information—the present loss of young Englishmen between 20 and 25 by military violence is 7,500 less annually than that of a similar age group in peacetime 100 years ago. The lecturer then went on to discuss what he termed "the authority of intention." A few years ago, praise of scientific research for its own sake would have been thought platitudinous, but recently men whose contributions to science, pure and applied, entitle their opinions to respect have maintained that scientific research should be restricted to the betterment materially and morally of mankind; and the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity, having no relevance to this, if not immoral is no better than harmless amusement. They strongly advocate planned research under authority; those who dissent from this faith see danger to scientific freedom. For this, control could be ideal only if we attribute a superhuman prescience to the planners. On such a system "Mendel's interest in peas might have seemed frivolous," though it has provided the scientific basis for genetics. It is indeed a commonplace of scientific history that discoveries made for the satisfaction of pure intellectual curiosity have often proved materially valuable to mankind.

Prof. Greenwood proceeded to a triumphant vindication of Galen's *De Temperamentis* by showing its modern application, among other things, to intelligence testing. "So the wheel has come full circle; temperament is an object of quantitative study. Galen may look down from Elysium . . . with a grim smile of approval." The lecturer concluded an address worthy of the tradition of his office by a glowing and well-deserved tribute to the work of the late Sir Walter Fletcher in organizing medical research unhampered by political considerations.

RADIOLOGY IN 1942

The 1942 Year Book of Radiology. Diagnosis: Edited by C. A. Waters, M.D.; Associate Editor, W. B. Firor, M.D. Therapeutics: Edited by Ira I. Kaplan, M.D. (Pp. 496; illustrated. 27s. 6d.) Chicago: The Year Book Publishers, Inc.

In spite of the difficulties resulting from the war the standard of excellence of previous years has been well maintained in the *1942 Year Book of Radiology* under the joint editorship of Drs. Waters, Kaplan, and Firor. Radiodiagnosis occupies the first 265 pages and radiotherapeutics the remainder.

There are numerous articles of great interest in the diagnostic section. In the section on the osseous system, mention may be made of a method of removal of iodized oil after myelography in cases of protruded intervertebral disks, and of a survey by Thomas of vascular tumours of bone. In the respiratory section an account is given of Kerley's work on pulmonary changes in erythema nodosum, and other articles of interest are on pulmonary coccidioid infection, toxoplasmosis, and mass radiographic surveys of the chest. In the cardiovascular section the attention is caught by the work of Barclay and his co-workers on the foetal circulation, and Nelson's method of abdominal arteriography is given. A number of rare gastro-intestinal lesions are recorded, including haemangioma, syphilis, and Hodgkin's disease of the stomach, annular pancreas constricting the duodenum, and two cases of double gall-bladder. Gutierrez contributes an admirable survey of large solitary cysts of the kidney.

Although no epoch-making discoveries fall to be recorded in radiotherapy the section on that subject continues to give a complete survey of the work done in radiobiology and in radiotherapy of the various systems of the body. Once again the Year Book of 1942 is to be recommended to all radiologists as an abstract of the year's work in both branches of the subject.

Notes on Books

BALLENGER'S textbook *Diseases of the Nose, Throat, and Ear: Medical and Surgical* has become a well-established institution, which keeps itself alive by the regular issue of well-revised new editions. The eighth retains all the excellent features of its predecessors, and although it contains nearly a thousand pages has the advantage that the new shape and style make it lighter and easier to handle. There is, however, one chapter, which might be called ancillary rather than essential in a medical sense—on the singing voice—wherein such extraordinary views are expressed that they surely require reconsideration by an expert on the subject. The section on the ear remains a brilliant exposition of the subject. Henry Kimpton publishes the book in England at 60s.

Young Citizen, by A. E. MORGAN, is published as a ninepenny Penguin Book. Prof. Morgan is an authority on literature and education, and in 1938 he was commissioned by King George's Jubilee Trust to survey the whole field of adolescent activities. His report, *The Needs of Youth* (Oxford), has become a classic, and this Penguin contains much of the material in a shortened form, together with an account of developments which have taken place since the war. Most of its content is fact, but his opinions are founded on long experience and keen observation. The book is a very handy introduction to the larger work, and indeed to the whole social problem of adolescence.

Denture Base Readjustment, by H. HIRSEKORN, is published by John Wright and Sons at 10s. 6d. It is the contention of the author of this small book that many worn-out and ill-fitting dentures with vulcanite or plastic bases can be made useful and comfortable again by relining them. There is no doubt that this can be done at times and may save the patient the cost of a new denture, but experience teaches that most dentures which are unsatisfactory are best remade from the beginning. The idea of using the old denture as a tray for a new impression is well known, but the author gives some helpful suggestions for the chairside technique and stresses the use of the old original gutta-percha for the purpose. This book is for the dental surgeon and mechanic; but the general practitioner is asked to advise on most things in heaven and on earth, and it is well for him to know that many ill-fitting dentures can be made comfortable.

The *Proceedings of the Cardiff Medical Society* for the session 1942-3 have been printed for the Society by William Lewis (Printers) Ltd. of Cardiff. The volume opens with Dr. A. W. B. Loudon's presidential address, and there are four other papers, including one on "The Mayos" by Mr. N. L. Barrett; also reports of clinical meetings and discussions.