REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS.

A Textbook of Ophthalmology. By W. S. DUKE ELDER. 2 vols. Kimpton. £3 3s. 0d.

A cordial welcome will be extended to this, the first volume of Mr. Duke Elder's great work. Its appearance has been eagerly awaited since the advance notices of its publication came to our notice, and, knowing well the high standard which was to be expected from such a worker, our hopes have been in no way disappointed. Mr. Duke Elder has long since won for himself a place in the forefront of British ophthalmological workers, and with the publication of this work that position may be said to be finally consolidated; as a standard book of reference his *Textbook* is likely to replace all others in these countries.

The appearance of this new textbook is timely. Recent advances in methods of clinical ophthalmological examination—in particular, the use of the slit-lamp—modern researches in biochemistry and in the metabolism of the ocular tissues, and the most up-to-date surgical procedures in the surgery of the eye, have called for the production of such a work. Mr. Duke Elder's text so far affords an admirable summary of the best and most authoritative opinions on the subjects dealt with, and the exhaustive bibliographical references at the conclusion of each section are proof of the pains the author has been to that his text should have the fullest authority.

This first volume is devoted to a consideration of the fundamental sciences upon which alone a thorough understanding of the art of ophthalmology can rest. It is divided into eight sections. The first deals with the phylogeny of the visual apparatus. In the following section is given a detailed study of the anatomy and comparative anatomy of the visual apparatus; each chapter is illustrated with excellent plates and diagrams; especial praise is due to the author for the lucid manner in which he has dealt with that particularly difficult subject, the central nervous mechanism of the eye. Special sections are also devoted to the physiology and the biochemistry of the visual apparatus, subjects which Mr. Duke Elder has made peculiarly his own. The last three sections are devoted to an account of the physico-chemistry, the physiology and the psychology of vision.

Mr. Duke Elder has achieved a task of no small magnitude in a manner which calls for high praise. He has been well served by his publishers, Messrs. Kimpton, in the presentation of his text and its illustrations. We look forward with eagerness to the appearance of the second volume.

J. B. McA.

Surgical Errors and Safeguards. By MAX THOREK. Lippincott. 45/-.

As the title would suggest, this is a book from which a great deal may be learned. It can be read with ease, as it is written in good English and the print is excellent. Through the text are nearly 700 illustrations, many of which are coloured. One notices with surprise two illustrations, one depicting the technique of spinal analgesia with the patient in the sitting and not in the recumbent posture; the second suggests that traction is being exerted on the returning layer of an intussusception.

Throughout his text, the author's aim is the patient's restoration to full health and function. Operative feats, spectacular surgery and ignorance on the part of the operator are rightly deplored. The text abounds in suggestions to assist in the diagnosis of difficult cases, and how to avoid pitfalls both before and during operation; this particularly applies to the sections dealing with the surgery of the thyroid gland and the abdomen. Many interesting personal cases are cited in the text. Conservatism is evident in every section. Dr. Thorek advocates lavage in both the pleural and peritoneal cavities, mentions the occasional use of Murphy's button, and still uses silk in intestinal suture. The advice given is obviously the result of a large surgical experience, and the writer does not hesitate to state which of many methods in his hands has given the most satisfactory results.

Common sense, thorough investigation, exact diagnosis, avoidance of unnecessary haste, and care in the performance of operations are all emphasised as a *sine qua non*. With a wide experience of disappointing

results and of postoperative complications, the author gives many useful hints as to how to treat these and, better still, how to avoid them.

As fair comment on an excellent book, one may urge that more attention might be paid in future editions to considerations of applied anatomy.

T. O.

Research Work on the Pneumococci and Their Enzymes. By A. COWAN GUTHRIE. Baillière. 7/6.

This work deals chiefly with the endotoxin (assumed to be the protein particles in the cocci) and enzymes of the pneumococci. The author regards "hæmotoxin" as the chief toxin of these organisms. This is stated to be a "blood poison," being lytic for red cells and leucocytes. Complement is regarded as being of great importance in extracting enzymes from the pneumococcus and the author advocates the determination of the patient's complement as a necessary preliminary to treatment with anti-serum. The combination of anti-serum and complement is stated to oxidise hæmotoxin, by which process "the hæmotoxin is reduced and inactivated," but alien bacteria can deoxidise the "reduced" hæmotoxin and so reactivate it.

A number of experiments are recorded in wearisome detail. These are supposed to support the author's views.

We are of opinion that the experimental work in this book could have been compressed within the compass of an article in a journal. It would have been greatly improved by the blue pencil of a vigorous editor. There appears to be no excuse for its appearance in book form.

The book shows many evidences of careless writing or proof-reading. For example, the "yellow fever organism" is "spirociteroides," "liquids" appears for "lipoids," "visibility" for "viability," "proteolitic" for "proteolytic," and "enthylhydrocupreine" for "ethylhydrocupreine." One more instance will suffice: "As bile extract causes complete solution of the pneumococcus, it should be given in this disease in the form of oleate of sodium."

J. W. B.

Recent Advances in Pathology. By G. HADFIELD and L. P. GARROD. Churchill. 12/6.

Keeping *au fait* with modern methods, or with the latest trend of thought in the various branches of science, is a matter of no little difficulty. Reference to the many journals is not always easy or convenient, hence the "Recent Advances" Series seems to be the ideal method, possessing as they do, in convenient form, all the very latest material available. The present volume opens with a stimulating account of the reticulo-endothelial system, in the course of which we learn that one of the views concerning the action of N.A.B. is that this drug is concentrated in the reticulo-endothelial cells near the lesion. Next we are taken through a summary of tissue culture and carcinogenesis, in which we read a fascinating account of Fibiger's work, his infinite capacity for taking pains, as exemplified in his tracing the origin of gastric carcinoma in rats.

There is also a resumé of the work of Gye and Barnard; their explanation of the problem is that the tumour is due to one agent only, which has the properties of a virus, and that the irregular susceptibility of this agent to lethal and other influences accounts for the variety and misleading nature of the experimental results obtained. Dealing with the action of radium and x-rays, it is curious that although the action of the two agents is of the same nature, and governed by the same laws, there are certain growths more sensitive to radium than to x-rays, and *vice versa*. Here, more than in any other work, one can appreciate the value of Canti's cinema work, which enables observation to be made over a long period and a permanent record to be kept. Reference is also made to the changes in the blood of those working with radium, in which connection we can recall how insistent the late Walter Clegg Stevenson was as to the importance of this phenomenon.

We have seen and made use of, on various occasions, the majority of the volumes in this series, and we have no hesitation in saying that, in an excellent series, this is far and away the best. The authors have neglected nothing. They have given a generous and faithful exposition of the work

of the many authorities, often presenting an aspect or view of the subject with which we feel sure they do not entirely agree, yet always with absolute fairness.

F. S. B.

The Clinical Interpretation of Aids to Diagnosis. Vol. II. Published by *The Lancet*. 1932. Price 10/6.

This book contains forty-five short articles on twenty-four different subjects which have appeared already in *The Lancet*. The shortness of many of the articles is rather a hindrance to their usefulness, for while brevity may be the soul of wit it is not easy to be both brief and lucid in teaching. The articles, as many as we felt able to appreciate or criticise, are well written and well illustrated. The choice of subjects is intelligent, for the articles vary from ones dealing with questions of daily importance, such as the x-ray examination of the chest or abdomen to those discussing rarer subjects such as the bacteriological diagnosis of acute food-poisoning. Many of the articles, of course, are just as good as those found in large monographs, though a bit shorter; a few articles are better than any chapter in any large monograph which we have read. The article on electrical reactions is particularly clearly written, and the writer gives one the impression that he writes from personal experience only. Most textbooks on neurology seems to be satisfied with copying someone else's description, and very few explain intelligibly the methods used and their interpretation. On the whole this book is well worth the money and is a useful addition to the library of any teacher or practitioner.

R. H. M.

A Textbook of Surgical Pathology. By ILLINGWORTH and DICK. Churchill.

This textbook has been written for the use of graduates and senior students, and it undoubtedly fulfils its object in a very satisfactory manner.

A certain amount of general pathological knowledge is assumed, and in consequence the usual chapters dealing with inflammation, suppuration, ulceration, and repair, have been omitted. The omission is an advantage since it permits of expansion in more practical matters without rendering the volume unwieldy.

It is difficult to select any single section for special praise. However, while reading the volume with one's own student days in mind, it was obvious that the present generation of students will not be sufficiently grateful to the authors for the coherent manner in which they deal with the subject of tumours.

The former unwieldy and headache-producing classification of bone tumours has been replaced by the classification adopted by the United States Registry of Bone Sarcoma. Bailey and Cushing's work on cerebral tumours permits a definite conception of a subject hitherto unsatisfactory on pre-examination evenings. The physiology of pigmentation is even rendered intelligible, thus permitting a closer interest in the melanomata, while the controversial material recently evolved in connection with the origin, production, and spread of carcinoma is dealt with in an exhaustive yet concise fashion.

If one point more than another is deserving of commendation it is this conciseness of presentation and the admirable manner in which the authors have discussed the salient features of each condition without indulging in unnecessary verbiage, so wearying and unproductive to the average student.

It must not, however, be supposed that this is a book merely for the student; it is essentially modern in its outlook and all the recent pathological developments are included; the bio-chemical theories of intestinal intoxication, Cheate's work on the breast, hyperparathyroidism, the anomalies of intestinal rotation, and the dystrophies of bone, to mention but a few, are all discussed in the same condensed and satisfactory manner which renders it invaluable as a work of rapid reference. The references at the end of each chapter permit consultation of the latest articles on the subject, and these latter, it may be remarked, are chiefly English references in which, of course, the publications of the Edinburgh School are prominent.

A word of praise is due to the publishers. The illustrations are excellent, creating a desire for more; while the clearness of the type and the general production of the book leave nothing to be desired.

F. M.

Surgical Pathology of the Genito-Urinary Organs. By A. H. HERTZLER. Lippincott. 21/-.

With this volume Professor Hertzler continues the excellent series of surgical pathological monographs now familiar to most surgeons "on this side." As with the earlier units, he has sought to cater in the main for the busy general surgeon rather than for the specialist. The defect, if defect it be, is perhaps somewhat more noticeable in the volume under review than in its companions. One leaves down this particular volume with the impression that, in a field of surgery which has now won for itself in most clinics the questionable title of "speciality," the writer's contribution is perhaps a little superficial; such subjects as urinary infections, renal tuberculosis and renal neoplasms are deserving of a deeper attention than is here given. The bibliographical references continue to attract by their selectiveness, and the illustrations are worthy of the highest commendation.

W. D.

Osler and Other Papers. By W. S. THAYER. Humphrey Milford. 21/6.

While Cushing's *Osler* will remain for all of this generation as the standard life of the "beloved physician," this series of essays by the Master's pupil and friend forms a delightful companion volume, a veritable *livre de chevet*. The Master is here described from many points of view—as teacher, practitioner, book-lover and host; not a few new stories are told of him which are not to be found in the official "Life," and all are wholly happy presentations of one of the happiest of men.

The "other papers" range over a wide variety of subjects: an address to boys leaving college, discussion of teaching and practice, the University and medicine, and two stimulating papers on Laennec and Richard Bright.

The author reveals himself in these essays as a teacher of great charm and stimulus, one on whom the mantle of Osler has fallen, and who has worn it as worthily as his Master would have wished.

W. D.

Specific Changes in the Blood Serum. By S. G. T. BENDIEN. Translated by A. PINNEY. Heinemann. 10/6.

Dr. Bendien's work has received so much notice in the public Press that it is of interest to read this contribution. The book describes his methods of investigating the proteins in the blood in health and disease. Unhappily, it makes rather difficult reading, and few definite conclusions can be drawn from the work. The translator has taken pains to elucidate some ambiguous statements, but careful reading is still necessary to follow the exact technique used.

The principal test employed is carried out by adding blood to varying solutions of sodium vandate and acetic acid. Precipitation results, the amount varying in the different solutions, and by measuring the height of the precipitate a graphic record may be obtained. It is claimed that this graph shows characteristic variations in certain diseases, notably carcinoma and tuberculosis. A further refinement of the test is the spectroscopic examination of the precipitate in one of the tubes (6th of the series). About twenty different dilutions of the precipitate are made and spectrograms obtained from these. By studying the absorption bands and calculating the co-efficient of absorption a further graph may be plotted for each serum. The first part of the reaction seems in many points to run parallel with the red blood cell sedimentation rate, both being increased in advancing tuberculosis, carcinoma, and pregnancy.

The practical value of the work has yet to be proved, but the book presents a number of new observations and should open up fresh fields for thought and work.

A. R. H.

Transactions of the American Gyn. Soc., 1931. Vol. 56. Ed. by F. E. GREENE. C. V. Mosby, St. Louis.

Again, the *Transactions* of the American Gynæcological Society appears as an attractively bound volume of nearly 300 pages.

This report for the year 1931 consists of nineteen papers, and each communication is followed by what appears to be a full account of the discussion to which it gave rise.

The choice of subjects is very variable, and while it includes a wide variety, it is noticeable that physiology and biochemistry are at the moment very interesting subjects of study to obstetricians and gynaecologists. Cervical carcinoma is responsible for three communications, one by Ward and Farrar, one by Lynch, and one by Crossen. Obstetrics attracted only five writers, and includes a very interesting article by Schwarz and Drabkin on the "Basal Metabolic Rates in Late Pregnancy and the Puerperium."

A paper by Bill on "The Treatment of Vertex Occipitoposterior Position" should prove of great interest at least to obstetricians in this country; the discussion on the subject demonstrated a wide diversity of opinion.

Attached to other interesting communications are the names of such well-known writers as Graves, Polak, Williams, Novak, Meyer and Geist, to mention but a few.

This 58th volume abounds in subject-matter for study and discussion, and is well worth reading.

J. F. C.

Acute Otitis Media. (Pocket Monographs on Practical Medicine.) By W. M. MOLLISON. Bale, Sons & Danielson. 2/6.

This pocket monograph is designed as an aid to the general practitioner, who is frequently faced with the problem of acute otitis media, and it will also prove very useful indeed to students. In its seventy pages there is an enormous amount of valuable information both on acute otitis media and on its complication, mastoiditis.

It is now generally realised that the prevention of a vast amount of adult deafness lies in the hands of the general practitioner. For this reason, if for no other, we recommend this informative little book to those to whom it is addressed.

T. G. W.

Medical Emergencies. By CHARLES NEWMAN. Churchill. 8/6.

The author's text is concerned with poisons and the majority of urgent medical conditions, comprises a short summary of the outstanding symptoms and a brief and concise description of the immediate treatment.

A full knowledge of the contents of this small but comprehensive volume is sufficient to enable one to deal with most of the emergencies to be met with in general practice.

E. A. M.