

Reviews

ARMY PSYCHIATRY IN THE WAR

Psychiatry in the British Army in the Second World War.
By Robert H. Ahrenfeldt. Foreword by J. R. Rees. (Pp. 312
+ xv. 35s.) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1958.

As the content of medicine enlarged and as the total size of the Army increased to meet the changing pattern of warring, the magnitude of the contributions made by the Army Medical Services to the prosecution of war grew progressively larger. In the second world war there was a planned, systematic distribution of the nation's man-power among industry, the essential civilian services and organizations, and the armed Forces. The Army's quota was insufficient to meet its needs, and towards the end of the war it became necessary to disband a number of its formations, and to reduce the size of others for the reason that the inevitable wastage could not be made good. Into the Army were drafted considerable numbers of individuals who, on account of the poverty of their personal attributes or of their occupational incompetence, were regarded as unsuitable for employment in the Navy or Air Force. Thus it came about that in the Army the overriding need to conserve man-power and to make the very best use of the human material drafted into it profoundly affected every aspect of the conduct of the war. The recruits it received differed markedly among themselves in such attributes as character, temperament, attitudes, biological and social maturity, educability, and educational standard, and acquired skills. Within the Army the tasks to be undertaken by the many very different occupational categories—such as the sapper, the member of a tank crew, the nursing orderly, the infantryman—differed equally markedly and for their efficient performance demanded different constellations of skills, aptitudes, and temperaments. Out of this greatly varying material expeditionary forces remarkable for the occupational diversity of their component units had to be fashioned and trained.

To the Army Medical Services the Army turned for the provision of the means whereby man-power wastage due to preventable disease and avoidable injury might be reduced to the irreducible minimum. To these Services, in association with the Directorate of Selection of Personnel, the Army looked for the prevention of wastage due to disharmony between the individual soldier and the occupational tasks he was required to perform. The prime responsibility of the Army Medical Directorate was that of shaping and directing a mechanism that would ensure that all available knowledge and skill relating to disease prevention, health promotion, and health restoration was applied to the full. To make such application possible the existing branches and directorates within the Army Medical Department were developed and expanded. Others, that were not required in peacetime, were added to them, among them the branch that bore the number A.M.D.11 and which housed the Directorate of Army Psychiatry.

Those who during the war years were in a position to follow the activities of this directorate and of its representatives in the different commands and theatres—the Army Psychiatric Service—could not but be greatly impressed by the great saving of man-power that was effected through the application of expert

psychological knowledge, with understanding, to the problems of an army at war. The members of this service were fortunate in many ways. They commanded the support of Sir Ronald Adam, the Adjutant-General, and of Sir Alexander Hood, the Director-General of the Army Medical Services. Than J. R. Rees and G. W. B. James there could not have been wiser or more suitable consultants. The choice of Brigadier H. A. Sandiford as the first director of the service was a very happy one. The young men who gathered around these were quite outstanding in respect of their intellectual equipment, their professional competence, and their ability to adjust themselves to the conditions and circumstances of an entirely novel world. They were unfortunate in that they had to contend with considerable opposition born of misunderstanding and prejudice. Their knowledge of the mainsprings of human behaviour tended to set them apart from the rest of mankind, and commonly they were regarded with suspicion. They came to be called "trick-cyclists," a pejorative term used by some to convey their amused contempt and by others to express their frank and somewhat venomous hostility. Some of the opposition came from the topmost levels of the military hierarchy; some came from their colleagues in the other branches of medicine. Had the advocacy of the senior members of this service not been so skilful, so diplomatic, and withal so convincing, and had the urgency of the need for the control of man-power wastage not been so great, it is possible that the psychiatrists would have been denied the opportunity to serve, to prove their worth, and to demonstrate the great value of the contributions that psychiatry could make to military medicine. However, the opposition to the development of this service was overcome; psychiatry was enabled to make its notable contributions to the war effort, and, because the unique opportunities provided by the circumstances of war were grasped and exploited by the psychiatrists in the field, psychiatry itself underwent a swift development.

So it is that Dr. Ahrenfeldt has a grand story to tell. He tells it exceptionally well. It is a revised and abridged version of a history of the Directorate of Army Psychiatry during the war years that was compiled by the author, mainly in 1948, when he was serving as Deputy Director of Army Psychiatry, and is based upon the official documents in that directorate. The book traces the development of the Army Psychiatric Service from its beginnings in the first world war to the end of the second. It presents authoritative accounts of the work undertaken by the Army psychiatrists in connexion with the selection and efficient utilization of personnel, with disciplinary problems, with morale, training, the treatment of psychiatric casualties in the forward areas, the rehabilitation of ex-Servicemen and repatriated prisoners-of-war, and the disposal of the mentally defective and dull. Most of the factual information contained in this book is to be found scattered through the many volumes of the official (Army) medical history. Dr. Ahrenfeldt is mistaken in thinking that in this history psychiatry claims only some 25 pages altogether; this is the allotment given in one of the volumes. But the value of this unofficial history derives from the fact that it is written by a psychiatrist who served in the directorate and who is competent to form a reasonable judgment concerning the permanent worth of the work that was done. He shows how there emerged out of the

experience gained a clearer appreciation of the importance of the preventive approach and of preventive action in the field of psychological medicine. Now that an interest in mental health occupies the centre of the parliamentary stage it would be well if this book were studied by all concerned. There is much in it that could be considered, with advantage, in discussions concerning the mental health of a population such as ours in days such as these.

F. A. E. CREW.

A MODERN CHINESE PHYSICIAN

Plague Fighter. The Autobiography of a Modern Chinese Physician. By Wu Lien-Teh, M.A., M.D.(Cantab.), Mast.P.H. (Johns Hopkins), Litt.D.(Peking), Sc.D.(St. Johns, Shanghai), LL.D.(Hong Kong). (Pp. 667+x; illustrated. 30s.) Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Ltd. 1959.

Those who have leisure to read this very large autobiography will be well rewarded. Dr. Wu, apart from being a very skilled bacteriologist and physician, has the gift of writing impeccable English. His experience of pneumonic plague, which swept through China in the early part of this century, gives a fine picture of the meticulous investigations carried out by him and his staff. The autobiography is, to say the least of it, discursive, but if one can skip long lists of names and get down to the real substance of the text one cannot but be impressed by the skill and energy of this remarkable man. It is often salutary to see ourselves through other eyes. The chapter on missionary work in China gives the considered opinion of a very well read and brilliant observer. Many of those earnest people of the numerous divisions of the Christian faith who gave their whole life, and in many cases their lives, to preaching the Western faith would not be flattered by some of the references to the effect of their work.

The book is more than a mere autobiography; it is a history of China and the Chinese, compiled by a man who, though born in Malaya, is a true "Chinaman," and, as befits his background, he writes from the point of view of a doctor. The chapter on Malaya and her problems is well worth a close study. Dr. Wu's efforts to control the "narcotic" menace is an edifying story. Again, it is doubtful if Great Britain, in spite of her protestations, was in the early stages as helpful as she might have been in dealing with this international problem. Indigenous medicine in China and Malaya is dealt with in a most interesting manner. Dr. Wu has some shrewd and pointed references to our National Health Service, whilst one quotation from an ancient Chinese proverb is peculiarly apt to-day: "The value of drugs does not depend on their price, but upon their effect; the value of prescriptions does not depend on their numbers, but upon their merit."

This autobiography, written by a "son" of Cambridge and St. Mary's Hospital, is a fine record of the individual attainments in medicine of a man who has deservedly gained a high reputation as a scientist, and in addition provides much useful information of the complexities of life in the Chinese nation.

J. C. A. DOWSE.

The third annual *Indian Year-Book of Ophthalmology*, edited by Dr. Vaman D. Sathaye, provides a short review of the ophthalmic literature of 1956. Appended is a list of hospitals in India where ophthalmic treatment is available, followed by a list of eye specialists in that country. The book (pp. 182) can be obtained from the Publishing House, 502, Narayan Peth, Poona.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received

Clinical Effects of Electrolyte Disturbances. Proceedings of a Conference held at the Royal College of Physicians of London February 27-28, 1959. Edited by E. J. Ross. (Pp. 210+x. 20s.) London: Pitman Medical Publishing Co. Ltd. 1959.

Zwanglose Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiet der Normalen und Pathologischen Anatomie. Edited by Professor Dr. W. Bargmann and Professor Dr. W. Doerr. Vol. 6. *Zur Orthologie und Pathologie der Hoyer-Grosser'schen Organe.* By Julius Schorn, M.D. (Pp. 88; illustrated. DM. 22.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1959.

Frontiers in Cytology. Edited by Sanford L. Palay. (Pp. 529+xii; illustrated. 78s.) New Haven: Yale University Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1958.

La Biologie des Homogreffes. Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. LXXVIII. (Pp. 284; illustrated. 2,200 fr.) Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. 1958.

Elektrophysiologie des Gesichtssinns. Theorie und Praxis der Elektroretinographie. By Wolf Müller-Limmroth, M.D. (Pp. 331+vii; illustrated. DM. 59.) Berlin, Göttingen, Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag. 1959.

The Clinical Evaluation of New Drugs. Edited by S. O. Waife, M.D., F.A.C.P., and Alvin P. Shapiro, M.D. (Pp. 223+x. \$7.50.) New York: Hoeber-Harper. 1959.

Principles and Practice of Obstetric Anaesthesia. By J. Selwyn Crawford, M.B., Ch.B., D.A.(England), F.F.A.R.C.S. (Pp. 128. 20s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1959.

Ceylon Hospitals Formulary, 1959. (Pp. 216.) Ceylon: Department of Health. 1959.

Neuropharmacology. Transactions of the Fourth Conference, September 25, 26, and 27, 1957, Princeton, N.J. Edited by Harold A. Abramson, M.D. (Pp. 285; illustrated. \$5.) New York: Josiah Macy, Jr., Foundation. 1959.

Physiology of Prematurity. Transactions of the Third Conference, March 25, 26, and 27, 1958, Princeton, N.J. Edited by Jonathan T. Lanman, M.D. (Pp. 157; illustrated. \$3.) New York: Josiah Macy, Jr., Foundation. 1959.

Introduction to Surgery. By Virginia Kneeland Frantz, M.D., Harold Dortic Harvey, M.D. Fourth edition. (Pp. 335+xiv. 48s.) New York, London: Oxford University Press. 1959.

Das Röntgenschnittbild des Ohres. The Tomogram of the Ear. By Professor Dr. Karl Mündnich and Dr. Kurt-Walter Frey. (Pp. 123+xii; illustrated. DM. 66.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1959.

Diseases of the Nose, Throat, and Ear. Edited by Chevalier Jackson, M.D., Sc.D., LL.D., L.H.D., F.A.C.S., and Chevalier L. Jackson, M.D., M.Sc., F.A.C.S. Second edition. (Pp. 886+xviii; illustrated. £7.) Philadelphia, London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1959.

Hypertension. The First Hahnemann Symposium on Hypertensive Disease. Edited by John H. Moyer, M.D. (Pp. 790+xii; illustrated. 98s.) Philadelphia, London: W. B. Saunders. 1959.

Trauma. By Harrison L. McLaughlin, M.D. (Pp. 784+xiii; illustrated. £6 6s.) Philadelphia, London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1959.

Textbook of Pediatrics. Seventh edition. Edited by Waldo E. Nelson, M.D., D.Sc. (Pp. 1,462+xxvii; illustrated. £5 15s. 6d.) Philadelphia, London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1959.

Handbook of Diet Therapy. By Dorothea Turner. Third edition. (Pp. 222+xv. 37s. 6d.) Chicago: University Press. London: Cambridge University Press. 1959.

Dringliche Chirurgie beim Säugling und Kind. By Dr. H.-E. Grewe. (Pp. 180+xi; illustrated. DM. 25.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1959.

Catalytic Models in Epidemiology. By Hugo Muench, M.D., Dr.P.H. (Pp. 110+xi. 36s.) Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1959.

Fundamentals of Physical Chemistry. By H. D. Crockford and Samuel B. Knight. (Pp. 463+xvii; illustrated. 56s.) New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. London: Chapman and Hall Limited. 1959.