

### Book Reviews

The detailed arrangement of this massive material into thirty-six chapters is an editorial feat—the testimony to an enormous amount of thought on the part of those dedicated collaborators to whom Sir Victor Negus pays tribute in the *Foreword*. Particularly apt among the illustrations are reproductions of some of William Clift's original drawings, which are now in the Library of the University of Melbourne. The short biographical notes are useful for ready reference, and a perusal of the 'Anatomical Index' once more brings home the enormity of the scope of John Hunter's vision.

It is obvious that all the promoters took a personal pride in their arduous task. Moreover, the Board of Trustees of the Hunterian Collection must be congratulated on having been instrumental in effecting the display of the pathological specimens as a separate unit in their new Wellcome Museum. The expenses for publishing the new catalogue have been borne by the MacRae-Webb-Johnson fund. For that service many will be very grateful for a very long time.

This catalogue is a truly remarkable achievement. Unlike so many other catalogues, it makes for exciting reading; the descriptions compel the reader to think. Thereby, it is bound to stimulate research and to promote further study. In these days of 'recent' advances, reference to this book gives many a salutary reminder of great things that have happened long ago. Altogether, this is a superb work—the most instructive catalogue the reviewer has ever read.

N. M. MATHESON

*U.S. Army in World War II: The Medical Department; Medical Service in the Mediterranean and Minor Theaters*, by CHARLES M. WILTSE, Washington, D.C., Department of the Army, 1966, pp. xxvi, 664, illus., \$5.00.

This well-produced and well-illustrated volume gives a good account of the medical services provided for the American Forces during their three years' stern fighting in the Mediterranean area. A preliminary chapter describes the medical provision arranged for the many defence bases in the Atlantic approaches. These were widely scattered from Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland in the north to Bermuda, Panama, the Caribbean and even the Eastern Coast of Brazil in the south.

The fighting in the Mediterranean included five amphibious operations—the first (Torch) in Northern Africa in November 1942 and the fifth (Dragoon) in Southern France in August 1944. Between these came the conquest of Sicily and the more prolonged combat in Italy with landings at Salerno and Anzio and desperate and sanguinary fighting across the Appenines. The military operations are in every case described sufficiently to enable the reader to understand the many and great difficulties encountered by the medical services.

The initial attack in North Africa revealed certain weaknesses in the medical services, but they were quickly remedied and constant improvement took place in the prevention of disease, the transport of the wounded and the surgical treatment both at the front and in the hospitals farther to the rear. Near the front line first aid treatment was promptly given wherever possible but it often took a considerable time before hospital treatment could be given, for difficulties in transport were often formidable. Long distances by ambulance over desert tracks in Africa, and prolonged litter-bearing by human agents along appalling mountainous paths or along roads deep in mud, often exhausted both bearers and patient before the hospital was

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reached. Tented hospitals were chiefly 400- or 750-bedded; the former were more useful nearer the front but the larger unit could sometimes move very quickly as in the instance mentioned on page 310 when a 750-bedded hospital struck its tents, travelled eighty miles and reopened at the new site within thirty hours—no mean performance.

Disease, as usual, caused a larger wastage than wounds; dysentery, malaria, typhus fever, venereal disease, and psychiatric disorders were the principal maladies. Cutaneous leishmaniasis was seen in Africa but the curative drug was in short supply. Malaria was brought under considerable control but some difficulty was found in getting all the men to take the prophylactic drug regularly. Penicillin became available in the later campaigns and greatly helped the successful treatment of wounds and of venereal disease. Neuro-psychiatric cases were common during severe fighting and early treatment by the psychiatrist enabled a larger proportion to return to the front line.

The results of the surgical treatment of wounds were highly successful as mentioned in the Prologue: 'So well did the Medical Department do its work in the Mediterranean theater that the chances of surviving battle-wounds were 27 to 1: of the 102,000 only 4,000 died'. That is a wonderful record, even when one remembers that many did not live to reach the surgeon.

There is a useful glossary at the end of the volume, and in the text are many very helpful maps.

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