

### Book Reviews

wrongly accused Lower of having appropriated Eustachius's discovery of the Eustachian valve and having turned it into his intervenous tubercle. Borelli's statement, implying an automatic myogenic origin of the heart beat, is quoted; essentially the same view can be found in Leonardo da Vinci to whom no reference is made. Much space is rightly given to the study of the pulse; here a curious omission is the name of Otto Frank (1865–1948). As the author points out, 'Adams-Stokes' attacks would be more accurate than 'Stokes-Adams', and it is interesting to note that, on the continent of Europe, the former designation is often used. The statement on p. 28 that Thomas Lewis studied alternation electrically seems to the reviewer to carry a risk for the uninitiated that the difference between mechanical and electrical alternans may be obscured. The place of contemporaries in the historical course of development of our knowledge is notoriously difficult to assess, and the singling out of certain authors is a somewhat precarious undertaking. Regarding arrhythmias, Prinzmetal's book is almost the only contemporary work mentioned, though in a rather guarded way; in the bibliography the book appears as if written only by him, whereas there are four additional and a further eight associate authors (even the insipid *et al.* would have been welcome). As East himself points out, the real nature of the arrhythmias discussed in that particular section still eludes us; if it appeared desirable to mention Prinzmetal, other contemporary workers, who have at least contributed as much to our knowledge, could with advantage have received a brief mention. The reviewer would also be reluctant to accept without qualification the statement that, to diagnose arrhythmias, 'Now we hardly need more than our ears and fingers.' Why should about half a dozen extensive books have appeared on this subject within the last six years if this were so?

However, these are but small points in an admirable presentation of a fascinating subject. One of Dr. East's predecessors as FitzPatrick Lecturer, Maurice Davidson, made, in the Epilogue to his lectures on Medicine in Oxford, an eloquent appeal to build a bridge between the humanities and science:

In this utilitarian age, with all its worship of the earthly and its apotheosis of the ephemeral, where better could we seek them [the materials for the completion of this bridge] than in the historical background, in the ancient spirit and atmosphere, and in all the nobility and grace and beauty of that great Academy of learning, whose motto for four hundred years has been *Dominus Illuminatio Mea*.

Dr. East, also an Oxonian, has, in these lectures, contributed to that desirable bridge a stone at once useful and ornamental.

A. SCHOTT

*Selected Writings of Walter E. Dandy*. Compiled by CHARLES E. TROLAND, M.D., and FRANK J. OTENASEK, M.D. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1957; pp. vii, 789. Illustrated. £5 12s. 6d.

This superb volume, so exquisitely, so artistically produced, forms an imposing and fitting memorial to one of the great pioneers in the surgery of the central nervous system. It does not embrace all that Dandy wrote—indeed, it would be impossible to do so in one volume—but the authors have gathered together seventy-eight of his most important articles. The first was written at the age of twenty-five, a year after qualification, when, under the influence of Harvey Cushing, he studied and described the blood supply of the pituitary gland. The last, on the location of consciousness in

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the brain, was published three months after his death, from coronary thrombosis, at the age of sixty.

Between these two contributions are the many that flowed from his pen and all carry the same stamp—originality and independent judgement combined with the dogmatism, the clarity and the vividness which characterized all his work.

As these 789 pages indicate, few surgeons have been so productive of so much original work so early in their careers, and still fewer have consistently contributed so much to advance their chosen field in their later years. The story, however, has not yet been told, for within this work is enshrined for posterity the many epoch-making contributions which were to change the whole face of neurosurgery.

Dandy's experimental and clinical study with Blackfan on the secretion and absorption of cerebrospinal fluid was the first of his masterpieces and will always remain a classic. With his inventive genius and superb technical ability, he devised operations to combat the difficult problem of hydrocephalus. The greatest of his contributions—undoubtedly inspired by Halsted—was the injection of air into the cerebral ventricles, a procedure he introduced in 1918 and christened ventriculography, soon followed by his operation of ventricular estimation for those too ill for ventriculography. The following year Dandy introduced encephalography—visualization of the ventricles and subarachnoid space by the introduction of air into the lumbar theca through a lumbar puncture needle.

Ventriculography has been described as the greatest single contribution to the surgery of the brain, for it allowed for the first time the visualization of distortions and displacements of the ventricular system by space-occupying lesions. The operation was at first received with doubts and misgivings until its potential dangers were realized and the indications for its performance crystallized. Then it became and remained for many years the most important accessory method in the armamentarium of the neurosurgeon and made possible the precise localization and frequently the nature of intracranial lesions which defied clinical interpretation. For the first time, tumours within the lateral and third ventricles and those affecting the pineal gland were visualized. This precision in localization would have been of little value had not its originator been gifted with an original mind capable of initiating and developing the complicated operative techniques to attack the lesions demonstrated, combined with the superb technical skill that could carry such experimental operations to a successful conclusion. Without Dandy's enterprise, energy and experimental genius and without his phenomenal success in hitherto unexplored fields, the achievements of modern neurological surgery would have been impossible.

This volume contains other classics of great importance. It describes the operation for total removal of auditory nerve tumours, operations for trigeminal and glossopharyngeal neuralgias and Ménière's syndrome and operations for the removal of intracranial tumours encroaching on the orbit—all new conceptions.

Another notable contribution is that on cerebral aneurysms—its value enhanced, as so many of the articles are, by the artistic and beautiful illustrations of Max Brodel and his pupils. Dandy showed that intracranial aneurysms were susceptible to direct attack, and he was the first surgeon to occlude the internal carotid artery within the skull. Today this aspect of neurosurgery has become one of increasing importance, and for its foundation we are again indebted to Dandy.

There are many other contributions—too numerous to mention—indeed, no facet of neurosurgery escaped his attention and all gained an impetus by his virtuosity.

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These collected papers—whose publication was made possible by his admirers and those near and dear to Dandy—bear witness to the truth of an editorial on his death in the *Baltimore Sun*: 'He had the imaginative genius to conceive new and startling techniques, courage to try them, and skill—the superb skill—to make them successful.'

Dandy's work inspired many during his lifetime and afterwards. This work, published a decade after his death, will inspire and re-inspire many more. It will also ensure that his stature in the field of medicine, great though it is, will grow greater in the perspective of time, and for posterity it will remain a beautiful and lasting memorial to a surgical genius.

ILLTYD JAMES

*Florence Nightingale and the Doctors.* ZACHARY COPE. London: Museum Press Ltd., 1958; pp. 163. Illustrated. 21s.

Florence Nightingale once said that she could talk better to a medical man than to anyone else. Because of this Sir Zachary felt that, by a study of her relations with doctors, it may be possible to obtain a truer picture of her character than by other lines of investigation. It was a wise thought admirably worked out and makes good reading.

At nearly every stage of her public life she came into contact with doctors, and among them were many of her best friends. Her life work had much in common with the work of medical men, and she herself had an important influence on certain aspects of medicine, particularly preventive medicine. She was a great sanitarian, an earnest advocate of fresh air, pure water and good drainage. She took a great interest in the construction of hospitals, and for half a century her advice was sought by most of those who were planning large hospitals in all parts of the English-speaking world. Mainly by her efforts the Army Medical College was founded, and her work in connexion with the Sanitary Commission of 1857 led to a great improvement in the general health and conditions in the Army. With the help of Dr. Farr she made a brave attempt to put the classification of diseases on a surer foundation and to institute a uniform system of hospital statistics.

During her long life Miss Nightingale necessarily corresponded or came in contact with many leaders of the medical profession. This lively study of the voluminous material now available and hitherto unpublished shows how great her influence was, and how much she was helped by the doctors with whom she collaborated. It goes a long way towards helping to elucidate the complex character of this most distinguished woman of the Victorian era.

Readers who enjoyed the splendid biography by Cecil Woodham Smith must have wondered why the apparently healthy Miss Nightingale took to her bed for the last forty years of her life. Sir Zachary in the final chapter suggests a convincing solution to this curious problem.

WILLIAM BROCKBANK

*The Royal Eye Hospital, 1857-1957.* ARNOLD SORSBY. London: Royal Eye Hospital, St. George's Circus, S.E.1, 1957; pp. 24. Illustrated. 1s. 6d.

The influence of specialized eye hospitals on ophthalmic education is without doubt, and the short history of the Royal Eye Hospital, one of the four still existing, makes interesting reading.

Professor Sorsby is an historian and under the five headings (1) The Rise of Eye