Among many good sections only a few can here be listed, such as the prophylaxis against puerperal sepsis and the technique of barrier nursing, a review of stillbirth and neonatal death, spasmodic dysmenorrhoea and the discussion on anuria and oliguria, but the chapter on venous thrombosis stands out particularly for its wealth of concise and lucid information.

The obstetrical sections are complementary to much that is contained in the author's Ante-natal and Post-natal Care, which explains the absence of chapters, for example, on abortion, pregnancy complicated by diabetes, disproportion and ante-partum haemorrhage. Undue prominence appears to have been given to heliotherapy in the treatment of pelvic tuberculosis, and a fuller assessment of conservative versus radical treatment might be given. The use of intravenous ergometrine before delivery of the placenta might be more fully debated for enthusiasm in its use is increasing and its consequent abuse becomes more likely. Isodose curve charts would be welcome in describing radium techniques in the treatment of uterine cancer, and a few more diagrams would be helpful in describing the development of the genital organs. These few minor criticisms are made only in hopeful anticipation of future editions. The book deserves, and will get, an assured place among the standard textbooks of postgraduate study.

I.D.

HISTOLOGY

By ARTHUR WORTH HAM, M.B. Pp. xix + 756, with 445 illustrations. London: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1950. £4.

Dr. Ham is Professor of Histology at Toronto. His previous publications include one in collaboration with a psychologist on the learning problems of medical students, and throughout the book he gives evidence of a real understanding of the student mind, of the simple-seeming problems in visualization that hold up even the brightest and of the profitable discursions into which even the dullest will gladly be drawn. Patiently and thoroughly he progresses through the body, never fearing to pause for explanation or to follow a vein of interesting application, gilding his primary business of descriptive histology but never neglecting it. The result is most impressive. This is not a book in which to look for minutiae of cytology, but it is remarkably thorough in dealing with many things which are simple enough but lurk somehow in the twilight of most people's knowledge—the relation between microscopic and macroscopic appearance in the skin, the cycle in hair follicles, the build-up of the liver lobule, endochondral ossification (with a really intelligible diagram) and many others.

The pity only is that he takes 756 pages to do it, and that the resultant cost is so high. Whether one could be justified in expecting students in this country to pay so much for a text book of histology is debatable. For its service in illuminating so much of the no man's land between anatomy and physi-

ology it will repay him the light labour of reading it, but much of it will be outside his needs. The practising histologist or histopathologist will find it chiefly of use as a source of ideas in teaching. For the embryo pathologist, who so often finds that his ignorance of histology is his first and highest hurdle, and to whom the more detailed reference texts are not at first much help, this is the best book I know.

B.L.

THE RHESUS DANGER

By R. N. C. McCURDY, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. Pp. 138. London: William Heinemann. 1950. 5s.

For medical men who are naturally chiefly concerned with the complex scientific aspects of iso-immunization, this book is a welcome reminder of the wider social issues involved. In its later chapters the author considers the position of the Rh-negative woman who has become immunized against her homozygous Rh positive husband, and who has little chance of giving birth to healthy children. The practice of contraception and the wisdom and legal implications of sterilization, abortion, adoption, artificial insemination and divorce as means of overcoming Rh incompatibility are all discussed.

Dr. McCurdy quite rightly emphasizes that his final opinion on the above questions can be given only at the present time.

J.V.D.

RECENT ADVANCES IN OCULAR PROSTHESIS

By J. H. PRINCE, F.B.O.A., F.S.M.C., F.R.M.S., F.Z.S. Pp. viii + 155, with 89 illustrations. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1950. 20s.

This small volume supplements the author's previous treatise on the subject with details of improved techniques and newer materials used in making artificial eyes.

Advances in this branch of ophthalmology, since the use of plastics in place of glass has become generally accepted, have concerned, largely, surgical techniques employing a suitable prosthesis to produce a mobile eye of improved appearance. It is less surprising, therefore, to find illustrations of surgical procedures in a work of this character addressed primarily to technicians.

H.E.H.

WORTH AND CHAVASSE'S SQUINT

By T. KEITH LYLE, C.B.E., M.A., M.D., M.Chir., M.R.C.P., F.R.C.S. 8th Edition. Pp. x + 319, with 208 illustrations. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1950. 35s.

More than ten years have elapsed since the last edition of this work appeared and a further edition has been generally felt to be overdue. In the interval Chavasse's conceptions of the origin of strabis-

mus in an interruption or perversion of the binocular reflexes have gained wide acceptance as practical proof of their validity has emerged, and the present edition, revised, largely rewritten and somewhat simplified will be welcomed by all students of ophthalmology. During this period, too, a more critical evaluation of treatment by orthoptic exercises has been possible and this is, perhaps, largely responsible for the apparent reorientation of the work towards these methods which have, as the author's preface points out, come to stay in ophthalmic practice.

Simplification and recasting have involved some omission, notably of the appendix of illustrative cases. These now appear, excellently illustrated, with the relevant text adding considerably to its compactness.

H.E.H.

A POCKET OBSTETRICS

By ARTHUR C. H. BELL, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G., Hon.M.M.S.A. 2nd Edition. Pp. viii + 156, with 14 illustrations. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1950. 7s. 6d.

The reviewer must confess to having just read this exceptional little book for the first time. It was published in 1946 and has now been completely brought up to date.

It is short and to the point, comprehensive and essentially practical. It is disappointing that the treatment of prolapsed cord by pushing it back into the uterus wrapped in a large swab is scorned. The dangers of pitocin are rightly stressed. It now seems that even smaller doses of one minim are more likely to stimulate normal co-ordinated contractions of the uterus. Ante-partum and post-partum haemorrhage and forceps delivery are very well covered.

This book is a short, clear and most practical account of the practice of normal and abnormal obstetrics. It will be popular with students for revision purposes, especially if they have already studied the Queen Charlotte's 'Textbook of Obstetrics.' It will be of real practical value to the midwife and the general practitioner.

I.J.

ON LOW BACK PAIN, ACTA ORTHOPAEDICA SCANDINAVICA, SUPPLEMENTUM No. 5

By LARS UNANDER-SCHARIN. Pp. 221. Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard. 1950.

This supplement is devoted entirely to some of the problems of back ache and sciatica. The incidence and morbidity rate due to this condition in a large section of the Stockholm population is valuable reading. The progress of those untreated, those treated conservatively and those by operation, with special reference to osteo-synthesis are other aspects dealt with in full. There is ample original study for those interested in this subject and an abundance of figures for the statistician.

P.H.N.

THE CAUSES OF BLINDNESS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

By A. SORSBY, F.R.C.S. Medical Research Council Memorandum No. 24. Pp. vi + 42. London: H.M.S.O. 1950. 1s. 6d.

This memorandum is based upon a survey of nearly 20,000 blind certificates covering, essentially, registrations between the years 1933-43 and, within the limitations of current methods of certification, presents an excellent picture of the causes of blindness in the group.

The increase in the number of the known blind is shown to be apparent rather than real and to be largely due to the adoption of more humane standards of certification in the years under review than obtained at the time of former surveys. By way of contrast to this apparent general increase there has been, among schoolchildren (the group for which figures are most reliable), a certain decline amounting to almost one half when the figures for 1948 are compared with those for 1923. This is due largely to the increased efficacy of treatment for infectious diseases and is shown in the great decrease in blindness due to ophthalmia neonatorum.

Cataract (24.6 per cent. of certification) still appears as the cause of a great deal of blindness and, although it may be presumed that some of the cases represent temporary certification later rescinded after operative cure, it is evident that a large proportion of the remainder could be removed from the blind category by timely surgical treatment.

Congenital, hereditary and developmental defects, glaucoma and myopia remain as major causes for which little effective treatment is to be expected in the foreseeable future and the fact that the last two produce their most dire effects in the later age groups presents a gloomy prognosis for blindness in an ageing population such as ours.

H.E.H.

NON-GONOCOCCAL URETHRITIS

By A. H. HARKNESS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. Pp. xii + 424, with 167 illustrations, 73 in colour. Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone Ltd. 1950. 52s. 6d.

Urethritis may result from a number of causes other than gonorrhoea and may produce serious effects remote from the site of infection. In many cases infection is acquired venereally and in others it is secondary to disease higher in the urinary tract. The author of this book is a venereologist who has had the advantage of a long and close association with urological work and is therefore very well equipped to present this subject from both points of view. He has produced an excellent review of the subject complete in detail, beautifully illustrated and produced with very complete bibliography. The most valuable chapters in the book are those which deal with the subject of the common condition of abacterial urethritis, and the author's methods, routine investigation and management of such cases in the V.D. Clinic. Whether his firm