

THE COLLECTED PAPERS OF WILFRED TROTTER, F.R.S.

Oxford University Press. 1941. pp. v and 194.
Price 10s. 6d.

The work of Wilfred Trotter and his outstanding contributions to the advancement of the science and art of surgery are too well known to need encomium, but the reproduction in book form of his published papers is indeed welcome, and this volume should find an honoured place in the library of every medical man who values the literature and philosophy of medicine.

Between individual essays, all of which bear the stamp of that clarity of thought and precision of expression which characterised their author, it would be idle to attempt distinction or to express preference. To two of them, however, it may be permitted briefly to refer in detail.

One of them illustrates in special degree the remarkable poise and intellectual balance which were among the outstanding features of Trotter's mind and which contributed so largely to the shaping of his outlook on the numerous problems to which his energies were directed. In the dissertation on "Observation and Experiment and their use in the Medical Sciences" (pp. 103-127) is to be found one of the most perfect instances of critical assessment and discriminative judgment with which we are acquainted in medical literature. It is to be regretted that there are not more among our ranks who are willing to model both their thought and their diction upon this masterly example.

The depth of the author's philosophy and his power of mental projection are even more conspicuous in the essay entitled "Has the intellect a function?" (pp. 165-186) to which our attention is called in the Editor's introduction. The theme of "the calibration of the intellect" is a majestic one, and though in this short paper the author does but lift a corner of the veil which covers this

vast domain of philosophic thought, it is sufficient to give his readers a gleam of what he would probably have achieved in this speculative field had he lived to labour in it longer.

It is hardly possible for any review to do justice to these writings or to convey an adequate sense of the beauty of their literary form and of the richness of their message. We hope that they will be read and re-read by all who have regard to the honour of our profession, and we feel no little gratitude to Dr. W. R. Trotter for having edited in such an attractive and convenient form these choice mementoes of his distinguished father.

CEREBRO-SPINAL FEVER.

By DENIS BRINGTON. 164 pages. E. & S. Livingstone, Edinburgh. 1941. Price 8s. 6d.

A great many people have anticipated that cerebro-spinal fever would occur in serious epidemic form in association with the onset of the war and the life in the shelters. It certainly seemed, therefore, that a small book on cerebro-spinal fever would be very opportune. Fortunately the epidemic in its grosser forms has not materialised, nevertheless, we are not out of the wood yet and it would be well for everyone who has charge of such cases when they occur to study this book. It is quite small. It doesn't go into lengthy discussions on purely academic points and is therefore of great practical use.

Probably the introduction of the sulphanilamides and their associated compounds has had no greater effect in the field of medicine than on this particular disease.

If a criticism may be offered of a book which is so intensely practical and dogmatic it would be that it seems unwise to disregard all the work which was done on the spread of meningococci from the nose and nasal pharynx and to state that such spread is entirely hæmatogenous.

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