Coagulation studies may well feel surprised that it should have been found necessary to publish a book concerned entirely with technical methods. It has been produced under the sponsorship of the National Research Council of America by a group of well-known American and Canadian investigators and has been edited by Dr. Leandro M. Tocantins. This book has now been in use in the reviewer's laboratory for several months and it has, in general, been found a valuable addition to the laboratory library. It has, however, certain rather serious drawbacks, the main one being that the techniques are often not given as described by their inventors, the author's own modification being given in preference. This is unfortunate, as, by multiplying methods, this inevitably adds complexity to an already complicated subject. Moreover, different methods receive very different attention. Thus, methods of prothrombin assay occupy 23 pages, while the invaluable thromboplastin generation test of Biggs and Douglas occupies less than four pages, and the reader is referred to the original article for details of the technique. On the whole, a more valuable manual would have resulted from a compilation of the original descriptions of the methods described, with addenda on suggested modifications.

**MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**


The first 200 pages of this book are devoted to a review of what is known about the distribution, aetiological factors, early symptomatology and progression of the disease, together with the differential diagnosis and treatment. The remainder, which deals with the pathology and problem of aetiology, forms the most stimulating section, particularly for those interested in solving the many problems posed by this important disease.

The general practitioner and physician must approach the book with caution. Until there is a specific treatment for this illness, the diagnosis of 'M.S.' (or D.S.) should not be made, except on the most concrete evidence, for the patient may be unnecessarily worried and, more important still, the medical observer may be led to ignore further symptoms and signs which reveal the presence of another neurological illness. Many minor and varied disturbances of function are described, and even the physician who is well trained in clinical rheumatology may have great difficulty in assessing their importance in any particular case.

J.N.M.

**FRACTURES AND JOINT INJURIES**

*Volume II*


The long-awaited fourth edition of the second volume of this famous book well maintains the high standard set by its predecessors. The arrangement of the matter is largely unaltered, but the second volume now contains the section on injuries of the trunk. In the latter section there is much new and valuable material on fractures of the spine with paraplegia, and in the other chapters new material has been added and alterations made in the light of recent experience. As in previous editions, the tone of the book is predominantly conservative, and throughout it the advantages of internal fixation are carefully balanced against its possible serious hazards. This tendency is particularly valuable in a book which will be used as a guide by many surgeons of limited experience, as well as by those with long experience of fracture treatment.

It is, perhaps, a little disappointing that in dealing with some types of fracture in which the best method of treatment is open to discussion the author does not support his recommendation with a statement of his results, but this is a minor criticism of a work which covers so wide a field. Again, although there is little in this book that is out of date, some surgeons may feel that in dealing with the treatment of traumatic arthritis of the hip Sir Reginald does not sufficiently stress the long-term hazards of the Judet arthroplasty. Some will be disappointed by the omission of the chapter on unusual and instructive cases, but the loss of this undoubtedly entertaining chapter is amply compensated by the vigour and clarity of the writing. The production of the book and the illustrations are, as in the previous editions, of a very high standard indeed.

Sir Reginald is to be congratulated on the production of this comprehensive and well-balanced book, whose fourth edition is certain to enjoy a popularity even greater than that accorded to its predecessors.

G.B.

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**BACK NUMBERS OF THIS JOURNAL**

If any subscribers have copies, in good condition, of MARCH and APRIL 1952, the Fellowship of Postgraduate Medicine, 60 Portland Place, London, W.1, will be glad to purchase them.