REVIEWS.

TRACHOMA.

By A. F. MACCALLAN, C.B.E., M.D.,
F.R.C.S. Butterworth & Co. London.
1936. Price 21s.

Although Trachoma is of such infrequent occurrence in this country as to be of interest to few but ophthalmologists, a comprehensive treatise on the condition will be of great value to any medical man working in a country at all heavily trachomatized.

The author is a universally recognized authority, and he reviews every aspect of the disease.

The first half of the book is devoted to the clinical aspect, the treatment and pathology of the condition; the second to the fullest consideration of its epidemiology. The author's widely accepted clinical classification is used, clearly outlined and illustrated, and the treatment of the various stages and complications is fully described.

The second half of the book may hold a more limited interest for some, but is a most efficient survey, and at least will give any reader an idea of the extent of the disease in many parts of the world, and an account of the now highly developed organization at work in controlling its effects and its spread.

APPENDICITIS : WHEN AND HOW TO OPERATE

By W. J. STEWART MCKAY, M.B., M.Ch.,
B.Sc., Senior Surgeon, Lewisham
Hospital, Sydney. Pp. 260. Illustrated.
Angus & Robertson Limited, 89 Castle-
reagh Street, Sydney. 1936. 12/6.

Although ostensibly written for the guidance of general practitioners and young surgeons the shrewd observation and clinical wisdom embodied in this monograph will commend it to a wider public. The easy conversational style makes it eminently readable. The meticulous detail lavished on every step in diagnosis and treatment, both under ideal hospital conditions and in remote primitive households, and including lucid

directions as to nursing and after treatment, renders the book singularly comprehensive.

There is evident throughout a strongly personal note, the assured views of a conscientious experienced surgeon, and instead of a pretentious bibliography there are free quotations of the opinions of eminent authorities from their writings, lectures and sayings.

The format of the book is good, but the illustrations are insufficient in number and crude in quality, a defect that should be remedied in subsequent editions.

The soundness of some of the confidently expressed views might be questioned. The rôle played by "chill" as a factor in pathogenesis is exalted unduly. "He must be warned about such things as silk pyjamas, sleeping without an undervest!"...and against "the south-east wind blowing on his abdomen." Such *obiter dicta* are likely to cause the modern youth to smile indulgently.

On p.135 it is strange to see 2% Cocaine advised as a local anæsthetic and on p.142 "the Fowler position must never be employed in simple cases at any stage." Surely, too, the draining (more usually "packing") of septic cases by iodoform gauze to be removed on the 4th day is hardly in consonance with modern practice. Whilst "the less food during the first 5 days the better" is sound advice, it is curious to read that fresh fruit can be given on the fifth day, namely pineapple, pears,—but not apples!!

The author's standard approach is by the Battle incision, supplemented if necessary by a transverse incision; the gridiron incision he relegates to its proper place, that is, merely one of the various sites in which a localised abscess may be opened. The Battle incision tends to decline in favour for anatomical reasons, most surgeons nowadays preferring the paramedian or the transverse. He rightly insists on the importance of careful hæmostasis, and his careful descriptions of such difficult problems as pseudo-ileus are excellent. The book can be confidently recommended as a competent, conscientious, practical treatise on a difficult subject.