BOOK REVIEWS

Medical Disorders of the Locomotor System. By Ernest Fletcher, M.D., M.R.C.P.
Second edition, 1951. E. and S. Livingstone, Edinburgh. Pp. 884. 60s.

When this book first appeared in 1947 it received a full and favourable review in this Journal (*Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, 1946, 5, 225). It was claimed that the book was "a most important contribution to the literature of the subject", and the appearance of this second edition is ample justification of this opinion.

There is no doubt that this is a good book which every practitioner in this field of medicine must add to his library.

The new edition is an improvement on the first edition, and has grown from 625 to 884 pages; its usefulness as a work of reference has been greatly helped by the vastly improved index. Here an entirely new "author index" has been added, extending over 10 pages, while the "subject index" has increased from $8\frac{1}{2}$ to 18 pages.

Apart from complete revision, new chapters and sections have been added by new contributors. Professor S. L. Baker has made an excellent contribution on "The Anatomy and Physiology of Bone", and Dr. J. Barrie Murray on "Psychiatric Aspects of Locomotor Disorders". Dr. G. D. Kersley has contributed a section on Hydrotherapy, and Professor C. Rimington one on "Synovial Mucin". Dr. H. J. Gibson is responsible for "Laboratory Findings in Locomotor Disorders".

Dr. Fletcher himself makes a valiant attempt at the impossible in trying to keep up-to-date with the enormous literature which mushrooms up around us on cortisone and ACTH. His additions include an up-to-date survey of the work done on synovial fluid and the collagen diseases. It is with justifiable pride that he welcomes his son, Anthony Phillips Fletcher, as a new contributor who writes a comprehensive chapter on the difficult subject of "Pain".

In a book so full and detailed, it is surprising to find so little mention of the treatment of the secondary anaemia encountered in so many cases of rheumatoid arthritis which can present so difficult a therapeutic problem. There would seem to be no mention of intravenous therapy at all, and the exercises advised for this type of case are not graduated as carefully as modern therapy seems to require.

It is extraordinary, too, how wide a variation of opinion seems to exist among different authorities regarding the optimum position for ankylosis of various joints and the period of time for which any one joint may be immobilized without producing an unwanted fixation.

The first edition was considered to be "well printed and lavishly illustrated", but the number of illustrations has now been increased from 261 to 377. The printing and production is typical of the excellent standard which we have come to expect of any publication from the house of E. and S. Livingstone of Edinburgh. The new contributors and the new revision maintains the high standard reached in the first edition, and Dr. Ernest Fletcher is to be congratulated on a worthy achievement.

His eagle eye, however, seems to have missed one small erratum carried over from the first edition. On page 349, in line 5 of the final paragraph, he states that "a *wealthy* country like ours should . . ., etc.". Let us hope that when the third edition of this book is reviewed, it will be found unnecessary to change this quaint old-time phrase.

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