BOOK REVIEWS


In France, the doctor who wishes to be a rheumatologist may seek the Certificate of Special Studies in Rheumatology. This will take him at least 3 years at the end of which he must pass an examination. The syllabus for the examination is described in detail and covers a wide field. This book would be a suitable text for that examination. There are no less than 43 articles packed into 774 closely printed pages, and all are good, standard reviews quoting large lists of references, (up to early 1965). Thus the book is more comprehensive than selective. None of the 23 collaborating authors rides any outrageous hobby-horse of his own through these pages. All use their allotted space in the marshalling and categorizing, exam-wise, of the divisions and sub-divisions of their subjects. This is a book for the swoat not the sceptic: interesting but not inspiring. One is almost lulled into accepting the diagram on page 591, concerning various treatments for sciatica. Operation is shown as being followed by the highest proportion of improvement, in over twice as many cases as those treated with anti-inflammatory drugs, but (reading between the lines) it is clear that the cases submitted to the various treatments were never comparable, so that no conclusions should be drawn. A. St. J. Dixon.


A meeting of surgeons (The Groupe d'Étude de la Main; Study Group for the Hand) brought forth this book, which will also have a wide interest for physicians and pathologists.

Dupuytren's contracture, mysterious, accessible, has intrigued surgeons for over a century, and many operations and other methods have been invented for its treatment. Much of this book concerns surgical indications and technique. Some favour local excision, others wide removal of the palmar aponeurosis. Some believe that the two histological appearances of Dupuytren's contracture (hypercellular with felted and interwoven collagen, or hypocellular with parallel collagen) represent two different varieties of the disease, others that there are two different stages of the same pathological process.

Hakstian, reviewing after an interval averaging 11·1 years, patients operated on by McIndoe, found...