BOOK REVIEWS

Medical Disorders of the Locomotor System. By Ernest Fletcher, M.D., M.R.C.P. 1947. E. and S. Livingstone, Ltd. Edinburgh. Pp. 625. Price 45s.

The sub-title of this book states that it includes the rheumatic diseases; it is a most important contribution to the literature of the subject, and appears, moreover, at a time when interest is focused on the study of chronic rheumatism to a greater extent than ever before. In addition to the author's own work, it contains valuable chapters by nine leading authorities on different aspects of the subject. In contrast with some other large works on rheumatic diseases, it does not merely present a survey of the literature and an account of the work of others, but it also gives an account of the personal experience and observations of the author, and this adds materially to its value.

One of the opening chapters on the clinical examination of the patients will be found very helpful, especially to those working in rheumatic clinics, but the general practitioner will hardly be able to spare the time in a busy practice to carry out the system advised, valuable though it is. The section on incidence and prevalence of these diseases, based on many official reports, shows a classification resulting from a somewhat narrow experience of the nature of different classes of work; for instance, miners and quarrymen are grouped together despite the very great differences in the conditions of occupation; miners work in a warm atmosphere, and are only affected by weather on emerging from the pit, while quarrymen are more exposed to the weather than any other group except agricultural labourers and their work entails physical strains of a different character. In spite of its importance, the influence of hot surroundings such as are experienced by stokers, blast furnace men, and the like is not considered.

The author's experience of the incidence of ankylosing spondylitis between the sexes is in striking contrast to that of others; comparison is made with Buckley's figures, which show a relative incidence of 10 cases in males to 1 in females, while the author's experience showed, in an early series, 32 females in 68 cases, and, in a later one of 22 cases, only 4 females; these figures are in even more striking contrast to those of Boland and Present, who give the relative incidence in American military hospitals as 20 males to 1 female; but it is to be noted that these figures are influenced by the fact they are based on military practice. Whether this disparity is due to a difference in incidence in southern England from that in the north or the U.S.A., or to a different basis for diagnosis, is a

matter of importance; but it may be that the practice of regarding slight radiological changes in the sacro-iliac joints as proof of ankylosing spondylitis is in some measure responsible, and the observations of Rogers and Cleaves (1935) on sacro-iliac epiphysitis are worthy of consideration in this matter.

Consideration of the importance of septic foci in the aetiology of joint disease shows a remarkable diversity of opinion, and in a series of cases in which improvement followed the removal of such foci the highest percentage was found in gout, which may throw a fresh light on the pathology of that disease. A chapter on applied anatomy by Prof. G. A. G. Mitchell of Manchester University supplies much information of service in diagnosis and management of joint disorders, and deals also with the mechanics of movement and the distribution of the spinal nerves. The common abnormalities and their possible effects are fully described. The physiology of joints is also fully dealt with. Fibrositis is the subject of an exhaustive survey by Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, who describes the many advances which have been made in this difficult and hitherto little understood aspect of rheumatic disease, and the various lines of treatment. Dr. Donald Hunter's chapter on the medical diseases of bone supplies much information of interest and value not readily available.

The many problems presented by sciatica and brachial neuralgia are dealt with by the author in a very thorough manner, and a chapter on backache and the spine describes many conditions which are often obscure and difficult to diagnose. The section on laboratory findings supplies information on the sedimentation rate which would be of more value had other methods than that of Westergren been more fully described: a recent annotation in the *Lancet* illustrates the importance of this. Insufficient weight appears to be attached to anaemia, which in the opinion of the reviewer is an important factor both in predisposing to arthritis and in its treatment.

Osteo-arthritis, which is often dismissed in few words as outside the range of effective treatment, is exhaustively described both in respect of the spine and the limb-joints; this chapter is by the author, who has done much important work on this difficult problem. There are many other special chapters deserving of mention did the limits of a review permit. Treatment in general receives full attention and much useful and practical advice is given. The section on gold therapy is sound and well-balanced, Physiotherapy, the application of plasters, orthopaedic measures, and surgery are all adequately dealt with.

The book is well printed and lavishly illustrated; and though the price is high which is inevitable in these days, the investment will be found well worth while; it can be strongly recommended to all who are concerned with the study and treatment of rheumatic diseases.

C. W. BUCKLEY.

Conferences Cliniques de Rhumatologie Pratique.

By François Francon. 1946. Vigot Frères. Paris. Pp. 386. No price given.

More than a quarter of a century has passed since Dr. François Francon started to practise in Aix les Bains. He is Vice-President of the French Ligue Française contre le Rhumatisme, a research worker, and a physician whose interests have embraced the social as well as the clinical aspects of his chosen subject, rheumatism.

This new book, written primarily for the general practitioner, is practical in its outlook. From among the diverse conditions that may be included in the term "rheumatism" he has taken certain fairly well-defined clinical pictures and, in simple terms, described their main clinical features and pathology, and detailed the treatment that his rich

and varied experience has taught him to consider as the best available. Unlike many French authors he has read widely, and is familiar with, the work of his British and American colleagues. All who are interested in the rheumatic diseases will learn something from his description of rheumatism affecting the shoulder, and of brachial neuritis and stenosing tenosynovitis. His description of Looser's syndrome, with its diffuse pains, paraesthesiae, and crippling, the multiple fractures seen in the radiographs, and the rapid clinical improvement that follows rest, adequate diet, calcium gluconate, vitamin D, and irradiation with ultra-violet light, is based on a larger series of patients than anyone has studied in this country. The author discusses without bias the indications for spa treatment, and the part that the spa can play in the treatment and prevention of the rheumatic diseases. In brief, in this—his latest—book, Dr. Francon has given of his best; he has discarded that which his clinical experience has led him to believe to be of little value, and has set an example which might be followed with profit by some of those who are writing, or have a yearning to write, a book on rheumatism.

FRANCIS BACH.

NUFFIELD MEDICAL FELLOWSHIPS FOR ADVANCED TRAINING IN CHRONIC RHEUMATISM

The Nuffield Foundation is prepared to award a few fellowships to enable some suitably qualified medical men and women to obtain advanced training in chronic rheumatism. So far as possible, the amount of any award and the conditions attached to it will be adapted to the need of the recipient having regard to the purpose for which these fellowships are offered. Normally the annual value of a fellowship will be between £500 and £800. In the event of a Fellow being required to travel abroad to obtain special experience or study facilities, the Foundation will pay the travelling expenses involved in addition to the award. A fellowship will be awarded for one year, but may be renewed for a second.

Fellowships will be open to men or women who are British subjects holding a medical qualification registrable in the United Kingdom, and who are normally resident there and who desire to specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and study of chronic rheumatism. Candidates must have spent at least one year since qualification in the general medical practice of a hospital, and preferably should hold

the M.R.C.P. diploma. A Fellow may not hold any other award concurrently with his fellowship without the permission of the trustees of the Foundation.

Fellows will be required to carry out, at institutions approved by the trustees of the Foundation, a programme of work and training similarly approved. Other work, paid or unpaid, may not be undertaken without the permission of the trustees. A Fellow will be required to submit to the trustees, at the end of each year's tenure of his fellowship, a report on his work during that year. Should the trustees at any time find that a Fellow neglects or has neglected the obligations of his appointment, they shall have power immediately to terminate his fellowship.

The Foundation is prepared to receive applications at any time. Medical officers at present serving with the armed or auxiliary forces of the Crown may apply for fellowships tenable on their release from such forces.

Forms of application are obtainable from The Secretary, Nuffield Foundation, 12 and 13, Mecklenburgh Square, London, W.C.1.