

Diseases of the Nervous System. By F. M. R. WALSHE, *O.B.E.*, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone, 1940. Pp. xiii + 288. Price 12s. 6d.

This very excellent but concise book is divided into two parts, the first dealing with general principles, the second with the more common nervous diseases. We would have liked to see in the section dealing with the treatment of epilepsy more emphasis placed on the maintenance of the patient's self-respect by means of simple psychotherapy. The epileptic realizes so well his dreadful handicap in life that kindness, sympathy and help mean far more to him than to anyone. Although psychotherapy in the form of psycho-analysis is of little use to the epileptic, simple measures can be of great assistance.

It is a difficult task to compress what is a very large and difficult subject into a small compass suitable for the average student and for the general practitioner, but the author has certainly succeeded very well; whether there is any real gain when this book is compared with the section dealing with nervous diseases in a good text-book of medicine is another matter.

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Neurosyphilis. (Modern Medicine Monographs.) By C. WORSTER DROUGHT, M.A., M.D. London: John Bale, Sons & Staples, Ltd., 1940. Pp. 241. Price 10s. 6d.

The author of this monograph, which is one of a series on modern medicine, points out that the book is principally intended for practitioners and students, but hopes that it may prove of interest to neurologists and syphilologists, as undoubtedly it will. The subject has mainly been approached from the clinical aspect, and the classification and description of the various syphilitic lesions of the central nervous system are admirable, as might be expected. Considerable attention is also devoted to the pathology of neurosyphilitic lesions, and the text is accompanied by excellent illustrations. An account of the historical development of the modern concept of neurosyphilis and its treatment lends further interest to the monograph.

The least satisfactory part is that which deals with treatment, and the author does not seem to have appreciated fully the potentialities of the methods of therapy now available. He rightly points out that the meningo-vascular forms of cerebral syphilis usually respond well to trivalent arsenic and the heavy metals, and he gives detailed instructions concerning their administration. Tryparsamide, on the other hand, is dismissed very briefly as an adjunct to the treatment of general paresis by malaria, and the other pentavalent arsenical preparations are hardly mentioned, yet there is ample evidence available at the present time to prove that these compounds may be of great value in the treatment of general paralysis, tabes, or asymptomatic neurosyphilis and may be used as an alternative to, or in combination with other forms of therapy. Attention is drawn to the value of malaria for the treatment of parenchymatous neurosyphilis, but only benign tertian is described. Mention is not even made of quartan, though this species of malaria is invaluable for the treatment of those who have acquired immunity to benign tertian. Blood inoculation is claimed to be preferable to mosquito bites, but this opinion is not shared by those in charge of the Horton Malaria Therapy Centre. Mention is made of the advantages of giving the fever in two stages as originally recommended by Wagner-Jauregg, but the dose of quinine here recommended

for temporarily aborting the fever, namely 5 grains, should only be given to mosquito-infected cases; for blood inoculated cases the dose should be $2\frac{1}{2}$ grains. The author advises intramuscular injections of quinine for terminating the fever. Except in rare cases where a very rapid termination is required because of some undesirable complication, quinine gr. v by mouth daily for 15 days is adequate for both mosquito and blood-inoculated cases, and avoids the disadvantages of injection due to the necrotic action of quinine. In the case of quartan malaria quinine gr. x by mouth for seven days has been found an appropriate dosage. The reviewer is quite unable to agree with the statement that over the age of 50 malarial treatment will only hasten a fatal termination in the majority of cases, for very successful results have been obtained in patients well over this age, and the mortality rate has not been found excessively high.

The other methods of treatment which are available for the treatment of general paralysis are mentioned very briefly and no details are given.

The most disappointing feature of the whole work is the author's failure to stress the importance of the prophylactic treatment of neurosyphilis, in spite of the fact that he appreciates the prognostic significance of the latent asymptomatic form of the disease. He mentions that many tabetics subsequently develop G.P.I. in spite of prolonged treatment with arsenic, bismuth and mercury, and that in manifest cases of general paralysis even with modern methods of treatment successful results are only obtained in about 30 per cent. of adult acquired cases and in an even smaller proportion of juvenile cases. It is true that he does say that malaria therapy is undoubtedly the best form of treatment for late asymptomatic neurosyphilis, but in a monograph intended for the student and the general practitioner the possibility and scope of prophylactic treatment should be discussed very fully, especially in view of the evidence now accumulating that in parenchymatous neurosyphilis prevention is considerably better than cure.

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