

Endocrine Man

A Study in the Surgery of Sex. By Dr. L. R. Broster. Pp. xi+144. (London: William Heinemann (Medical Books), Ltd., 1944.) 12s. 6d. net.

IT is impossible to review this book in the space available. It is full of ideas, records of experimental work and stimulating discussion. Every page of it counts. The author is a surgeon at the Charing Cross Hospital, and his broad thesis is a discussion of the origin and evolution of what he calls the instinctive tripod, namely, self-preservation, growth and sex, all of which are classified as instincts. The chapter leading to his discussion of instinct is a remarkable summing up of the development of animals. Like the final chapter on the nature of man, it reveals the author's wide knowledge and outlook.

The chapters on the evolution of species, on the physiology of the autonomic nervous system and on the functional evolution of the endocrine system are no less valuable. The last-named chapter introduces the author's study of virilism, feminism, intersexuality and other more obscure conditions due to disorders of the adrenal, the pituitary and the genital glands, which he has been conducting with his collaborators at the Charing Cross Hospital for the last fifteen years. The book reveals some of the remarkable results which have been achieved by the surgical treatment of these disorders and discusses their biological significance. The quality and trend of this discussion may be gathered from the author's suggestion, based upon his experience and clinical observation, that, whatever the genetic (chromosomal) constitution may be, this may be overridden by hormonal influences.

In his last chapter the author suggests that slight adaptations resulting from nervous and endocrine control (he has already discussed the interplay between hormones and the functions of the brain) could be "inscribed in the framework of the germ cells". This view visualizes the vital role of the endocrine system in the integration of development and also suggests that "variable factors may be introduced into the germ plasm through its hormones to account for influences which, on the whole, have consistently led to the progress of mankind". Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell contributes an interesting foreword and there is a valuable bibliography. Everyone will hope that the work of this team, interrupted by surgical war service, will be resumed as soon as possible.

G. LAPAGE.

Human Reproduction and Venereal Disease

By Dr. John Drew. Pp. 124. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1944.) 3s. 6d. net.

THIS layman's guide to the venereal diseases is wider in scope than the title suggests. It covers human anatomy, the venereal diseases and their treatment, their relation to sterility and their sociological implications. The descriptions of diseases are accurate, but as the author has gone to so much trouble to give the medical terms for the lesions he describes it would have been wiser to avoid all possibility of misinterpretation in the case of "condylomata" and have called them "condylomata lata". Many people have condylomata but only some are also syphilitic. Some purists might quibble at the guides to pronunciation given for treponema (trepron-nee-mar) and gumma (gum-mar).

A book for laymen is scarcely the place to indulge in discussions about criteria of cure in syphilis. Even

if biological cure cannot be attained, clinical cure is possible in nearly every case of early syphilis if the patient will co-operate, and this is all that it is necessary to say. A more hopeful note could have been sounded on the length of treatment for syphilis in these days when intensive treatment is widely used and penicillin is just over the horizon.

Sheffield Burns

By Dr. W. H. Hatfield. Pp. 213. (Sheffield: J. W. Northend, Ltd., 1943.) 7s. 6d.

SHORTLY before his unexpected death, Dr. Hatfield, whose name is closely associated with the development of special steels, had completed some reflexions on people and things, inspired by the sight of the great conflagration in Sheffield during the air raids of 1940. Dr. Hatfield was a devoted son of Sheffield, and his aim in writing was to help in its restoration. The little book contains reminiscences of the author's contacts with scientific men and other notable people at home and abroad, brief accounts of visits to industrial centres in other countries, and expressions of personal opinion on matters of public interest. His views on economic questions, based on experience in large-scale industry, lean strongly to the side of private enterprise, while his remarks on scientific and industrial research and its organization gain weight from his own marked success in stimulating co-operative research in the iron and steel industry, and from his earnest advocacy of a similar policy for industry in general. Any profits from the sale of the little book are to be devoted to St. Dunstan's.

The Statesman's Year Book

Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1944. Edited by Dr. M. Epstein. Eighty-first annual publication, revised after Official Returns. Pp. xxxvii+1484. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1944.) 30s. net.

IN spite of current difficulties, the new issue of this valuable reference volume maintains its scope and size. Revision of statistics has been difficult and for many States impossible, but the latest available are given. For many parts of the British Commonwealth and the United States figures are of a recent year. The section on the armed forces of the United States has been extended. Other additions include a short account of the British Council and its aims, the Middle East Supply Centre, and, under Australia, an account of the Australian Capital Territory. The introductory tables of comparative production of various commodities have had to be omitted, but there is still a section on the League of Nations. A coloured map shows the extent and boundaries of Poland at various periods in the history of that State. The useful book-lists for each State have been fully revised.

Brompton Hospital Reports

A Collection of Papers recently published from the Hospital. Vol. 12, 1943. Pp. vii+163. (London: Brompton Hospital, 1944.) 8s. net.

THE papers in this volume are reprints of recent work by members of the Brompton Hospital staff. Most are concerned with diseases of the chest. In an interesting statistical survey on "The Health of the Doctor", Dr. A. Hope Gosse challenges the title of 'the doctor's disease' often given to coronary thrombosis.