

right iliac fossa is best elucidated by examination by X rays; but they wisely assert that the clinician should in every instance explain the case fully to the radiologist and himself be present at the radiological examination. "Nous ne saurions admettre qu'il suffit d'adresser au radiologiste ces malades avec un 'bon pour une radiographie ou une radioscopie' pour avoir à coup sûr la clé d'un diagnostic difficile."

As to treatment, they consider that medical measures should be fully tried before surgery is considered. When operation is thought advisable they recommend, in the first resort, the undoing of any occluding adhesions and the removal of the appendix; if further measures are necessary, an ileo-sigmoidostomy or cæco-sigmoidostomy or even an ileo-transversostomy. Finally, if symptoms persist they consider the portion of the large bowel proximal to the anastomosis should be excised. Anastomosis, in their opinion, should be performed by a Villar's button, and the covering peritoneal layer approximated by the ligaturing together of portions of the contiguous peritoneal surfaces; we can see little advantage and some disadvantage in this method of union. The authors think that it is well to avoid the use of the needle in making the anastomosis. Valuable hints are given as to caution in prognosis. The authors point out that after operation instantaneous cure cannot be hoped for. Whatever the nature of the intervention the intestine must have time to adapt itself, and considerable patience is needed by the doctor and the patient before a final good result has been achieved.

It would appear that the patient is sometimes merely transferred from one to another form of invalidity, and those who are enthusiasts on the short-circuiting operation will do well to consider these conclusions.

COLLOID CHEMISTRY.

Laboratory Manual of Colloid Chemistry. By HARRY N. HOLMES, Professor of Chemistry in Oberlin College, Ohio. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd.; New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1922. Pp. 127. 10s.

THIS admirable little manual will be found most useful to those teachers, students, and research workers who wish to confirm by personal experiment what they have already learnt from a theoretical study of the properties of the colloids. There are 186 experiments in all, collected from the most various sources, with excellent references to theoretical text-books and larger manuals incorporated in the text. Most of the experiments described are quite simple; their range is wide, for the properties of colloids are not only of importance in pure science, but also in many industrial, culinary, and pharmaceutical processes. Among the 65 experiments indicated as suitable for medical students, some of Bayliss's experiments on Congo red might with advantage have been included; these and other experiments of physiological importance could easily be introduced, however, by teachers of honours classes.

AIDS TO ORGANOTHERAPY.

By IVO GEIKIE COBB, M.D., M.R.C.S., Neurologist, Ministry of Pensions, &c. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1922. Pp. 183. 5s.

THIS little book is practically a pocket edition of Dr. Cobb's well-known volume, "The Organs of Internal Secretion," the third edition of which was reviewed in THE LANCET of Dec. 10th, 1921. Those who have little or no time in which to peruse the larger works on the subject of endocrinology will find here a useful summary. Dr. Cobb asserts on p. 22 that ligature of the vas deferens is followed by atrophy of the interstitial cells of the testicle. This is in direct opposition to the continental view that increase in sexual vigour, associated with hypertrophy of the interstitial cells, results from ligature of the vas, and the operation has been performed abroad and in America on elderly people with this object in view.

Dr. Cobb's recommendation of a combination of thyroid and parathyroid extracts in the treatment of certain toxæmias should be useful; some of the ill-effects of thyroid administration can be materially diminished if parathyroid extract is given simultaneously, for the decreased calcium index of the blood caused by the former may be checked by the parathyroid extract. A very small book dealing concisely with a restricted branch of therapeutics has a better chance than one in which large sections of medicine or surgery are compressed into tablet form, and this volume appears to be one of the most adequate of the series of Aids.

LA MÉTHODE PSYCHANALYTIQUE.

By Dr. RAYMOND DE SAUSSURE. Lausanne: Payot et Cie. 1922. Pp. 188.

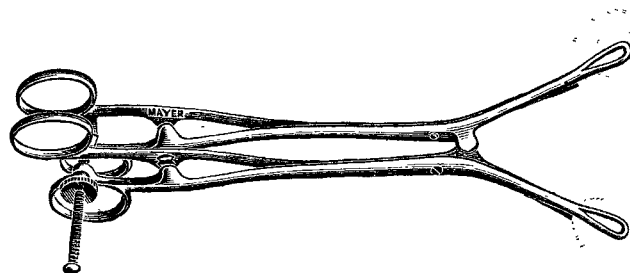
THE output of psycho-analytical literature in England and America has had no parallel in France, and it is significant that what appears to be the first exposition of psycho-analysis in French should come from Switzerland. The writer claims only to give a résumé of theory and technique as applied in medicine, and Freud himself gives his blessing in a short introduction. References to other writers are frequent, and English psychologists find due recognition, but there is little attempt to convince by argument. Dr. de Saussure assumes that the reader takes up the book with a desire to know rather than a need to be convinced. There is an original account of the analysis of a case by Dr. Charles Odier, concluding with a plea for the much debated "short analyses" which, without obtaining an absolute cure, serve the practical end of removing symptoms.

The book provides a clear and authoritative account of psycho-analysis. Its price is not stated, but the make-up is of the kind that enables continental publishers to produce cheaply.

New Inventions.

TWIN TONSIL COMPRESSOR.

I HAVE recently devised an instrument for exerting pressure on the tonsil-bed after enucleation of tonsils. The accompanying illustration indicates its construction and action. It is made of two swab-holding forceps bent at an angle a short distance from the tip,



so that when jointed together, approximation of the handles causes a separation of the blades which, holding gauze swabs, press on the tonsil-bed and effectively control hæmorrhage. The screw-bolt at the handle allows of regulation of pressure exerted, and further of its use in any patient from a child to adult. This twin tonsil-bed compressor may be used at the operation itself, or in case of bleeding after the patient has returned to bed; in the latter case a suitable dose of morphia should be given before application of the compressor. It is easily applied and removed, is light in weight, and remains in position by the pressure exerted on the tonsil-bed. I have used it in many scores of cases and have found it effective as a hæmostat.

The instrument is made by Messrs. Mayer and Phelps, London.

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Ilford, Essex. F.R.C.S. Eng.

THE LANCET.

LONDON: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1922.

The Welfare of the Blind.

THE third annual report of the Departmental or Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Health on the Welfare of the Blind makes pleasant reading for those who are interested in the subject, and the number of those uninterested should be, and must be, very small. There are few professional provinces in which such rapid and substantial progress have been made in recent years, the sufferings entailed by the late war being directly responsible for the advance. The Blind Persons Act has now been in existence for two years and the report of the Committee shows that its effects in ameliorating the condition of the necessitous blind are substantial and progressive. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the details of the provisions enacted by the Act and the actual methods adopted for the relief of the blind are not more generally known. The value of propaganda in drawing the attention of the community at large to any particular subject cannot be over-estimated, and this point should receive the attention of the Advisory Committee. The report of the latter is headed "For official use," and will therefore remain largely unknown—and unread. In contradistinction, the Labour Party has, with energy and foresight, issued a monograph fully describing the Act and its working, and drawing from the latter deductions which are largely in opposition to the opinions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, a situation which calls for comment.

The outstanding point of contention is the question of voluntary effort. The Labour Party has pledged itself to gain complete municipal control and responsibility for working the Act, and in its manifesto is critical of the failure of voluntary effort to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the Act, and to improve substantially the conditions under which the blind still live. The Advisory Committee, on the other hand, strongly recommend the desirability of fostering the voluntary side of the work and deplore the suggestion of municipal control. The attitude of the contending views may well be illustrated by quoting directly from the two reports. At the Cardiff Trades Union Congress a resolution was passed, which after some preliminary instructions goes on to say, as follows:—

"Notwithstanding anything which may be done to ameliorate the bad conditions of life and labour for the blind by Acts and Clauses, which are mere palliatives, this Congress is resolved upon the principle of direct and complete State and Municipal responsibility, and the elimination of the necessity for voluntary charity for the blind."

The contrary view of the Advisory Committee is thus expressed:—

"We would view the municipalisation of the trading activities of the blind with a certain amount of anxiety. . . . In our opinion all workshops for the blind should, as far as possible, be conducted on a proper economic basis, and it seems to us that municipalisation may destroy this basis with unfortunate effects on the morale and efficiency of the

workers. There is also the danger of the creation of an artificial wage, which would not be accompanied by the ordinary disciplinary methods of dismissal. . . . We are emphatically of opinion that the best interests of the blind themselves will be served by the continuance and fostering of the voluntary side of the work and we note with pleasure that this is the declared policy of the Ministry."

We much regret the attitude of the Labour Party. Voluntary effort is the basis of our hospital system, for the support and maintenance of which, as the best system for the community at large, so much endeavour is being put forth just now. For the blind, as for other sections of the community, voluntary effort has been the mainstay of work done in the past, and, in our view, it will be the chief source of advance in the future. When Municipal Control enters public interest may fail, and the progress now so certain will falter or cease. What can be effected by voluntary effort for the blind has been shown by the work effected by St. Dunstan's Hostel in the war, and recently by the magnificent report of the National Institute for the Blind, of which a précis was given in the columns of THE LANCET recently. But the public cannot be expected to realise the necessities of supporting any project of relief unless fully acquainted with what is being done and what is required, and the Ministry of Health should stimulate public interest in the great work of aiding the necessitous blind by letting all sections of the community into the details of schemes enacted and progress made.

With regard to the actual working of the Blind Persons Act, we note first that the grant of a pension to blind persons between the ages of 50 and 70 at the same rates and on the same conditions as old age pensions, has resulted in 9107 blind persons being in receipt of this relief on March 31st, 1922. The reduction of the qualifying age for pension to 50 years has proved a very substantial benefit to many of the necessitous blind. Out of a total blind population in England and Wales of 34,894 persons, 1383 are classified as mentally defective, of whom 710 are "unemployable." The relief of this section of the blind community presents the greatest difficulty, and at present the best way of dealing with it has not been arrived at. Obviously enough special homes for these unfortunates form one very practical solution, but efforts in this direction seem to be more or less at a standstill for want of funds. The education of blind children, which is of supreme importance, is considerably hampered just now by the financial condition of the country generally, and by the refusal of the Ministry to allow capital expenditure. The National Joint Council in its pamphlet complains, with some reason, that the school accommodation for blind children remains hopelessly inadequate, and that the voluntary agencies are so far incapable of providing a remedy. It is earnestly to be hoped that the Ministry will take an early opportunity of remedying this state of things. The absolute necessity of the *early* training of the blind cannot be insisted upon too strongly. Upon it very largely depends the power of teaching the blind person to be self-supporting. Far too many of the blind endeavour to earn their living by pure manual labour as handicraftsmen in trades, whereby the market is overstocked and a very insufficient remuneration is obtained. There are now open to the properly educated and intelligent blind a number of callings through which complete independence can be secured; but they demand a special training and education which must be commenced at an early age, and continued steadily through the years of mental growth. Workshop accommodation