

the technical principles that underly surgical treatment of the hand; the various injuries of the skin, tendons, nerves and bones, and the various rehabilitation procedures. A chapter is also devoted to infections.

The book is amply illustrated with photographs of operation and dissected specimens, but, in a number of instances, these pictures do not demonstrate very well the points intended.

The general practitioner who deals with the minor injuries and infections will find useful and up-to-date information on the correct management of these cases. At the present time it is rare for the practitioner to have to undertake anything but the most simple of surgical procedures in managing hand infections. With adequate systemic antibiotic therapy almost all cases will localize or resolve, and any surgical interference is usually limited to simple drainage of superficial collections of pus.

A Textbook of Psychiatry. SIR DAVID HENDERSON AND THE LATE R. D. GILLESPIE. Oxford University Press. 8th Edition. 1956. Price 35s.

This textbook on psychiatry is a medical classic. The student of the subject will find its pages bursting with information. It starts off with a concise and yet comprehensive historical review of psychiatry. The case histories, carefully chosen and well laid out, are a delight to read. The advances in modern psychiatry are described, but the authors wisely point out that there are also limitations. For instance we are told that in the treatment of " psychosomatic disorders " the psychiatrist has only a modest part to play. For the established general practitioner, this is more a book of reference than anything else, but it should have a place in every practice library.

There is room for constructive criticism. The place of the general practitioner is largely ignored. A section is devoted to the importance of social medicine, and the role of the industrial medical officer. If, as the authors claim, a quarter to a third of absence from work is due to neurosis; then this is essentially a problem of general practice. The place of the general practitioner in psychiatry is worthy of greater emphasis. The section on certification is not easy to follow, and it is surely out of date. The Reception Order, we are told, can be invoked by the Relieving Officer, who disappeared in 1948 and gave way to the Duly Authorised Officer. No clear reference is made to Section 20 whereby the problem case can be admitted to a mental hospital for 17 days without resorting to certification. A Royal Commission has been reviewing the whole legal side of mental illness, and it is probable that within a year or two the structure of the law will be changed, and this chapter will have to be re-written in any case. The clarification of this section will be appreciated by the general practitioner.