

BOOK REVIEW

HYPOTHERMIA FOR THE NEUROSURGICAL PATIENT, By ANTONIO BOBA, M.D.
Springfield: Charles C. Thomas. Toronto: The Ryerson Press. 1960. \$6.50.

IN THIS SHORT BOOK the author has attempted to place before the anaesthetist sufficient data to carry out hypothermic anaesthesia for neurosurgical operations. It must be assumed that those who would make use of the book have reached a high standard of training in their specialty and also that they have had considerable experience in the management of poor risk patients. The book may also be of assistance to senior graduate students as an aid to practical teaching in a neurosurgical unit.

The physiology of hypothermia is reviewed at some length, and the bibliography is fairly extensive. More emphasis might be placed upon the fact that very little, if anything, is known of what is "normal" in an anaesthetized hypothermic patient. Until individual studies of organ and cellular metabolism and respiration can be carried out, there will be no means of establishing the "normal" state.

A discussion of typical cases is always beneficial. In this section a more complete discussion of the method and criteria of selection of cases is omitted. Examples of positive and relative contra-indications to this type of procedure and illustrations of the complications which might arise resulting from the abnormalities is of prime concern to anaesthetists, surgeons, and physicians, and should be included.

The summaries and conclusions at the end of each section provide a ready reference and quick review. It is hoped that graduate students will understand that this book is a summary of the bibliography, which must be read, and not presume that the book is an expansion of the conclusions which may be memorized for examination purposes.

B.M.

HYPOTHERMIA IN SURGICAL PRACTICE. By KEITH COOPER and DONALD ROSS.
Toronto: Cassell and Company Ltd. 1960. \$3.35.

THIS BOOK is a useful introduction to the subject of hypothermia and is suitable for the student of anaesthesia or surgery. It provides a general outline of hypothermia as seen in present-day surgical practice.

The initial chapters provide a sound background of basic physiology and pharmacology. The remaining chapters deal with most methods and types of cooling, including unintentional hypothermia! A long list of references provides additional sources of information. It is of value to those entering the field of hypothermia but is not suitable for those interested in its more detailed aspects.

A.W.C.

A DOCTOR'S MEMOIRS, By A. I. WILLINSKY. Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd. 1960. \$4.25.

THIS IS the autobiography of a Jewish graduate of the University of Toronto in the year 1908. Though he ranked in the top twelve of his class, he was unable to secure an appointment as interne at any of the teaching hospitals of his own city. It was apparent at that date that the major teaching hospitals excluded those of his faith from those posts. In this connection it may be noted that at that time the proportion of Jewish students in the medical school was very small. Undismayed, though somewhat disillusioned, Dr. Willinsky after short periods of practice at Toronto and as *locum tenens* in the country went abroad to further his post-graduate training, a policy in which he persevered intermittently for a number of years. For a man of ability and aggressive by nature, study at Vienna, Dublin and major centres in the United States provided the experience from which he was able to institute certain projects not then well-established in Toronto. While not the first to give spinal anaesthetics in that city, he was the first to reinstitute this procedure, one which had fallen into disrepute there as in most parts of the medical world. Following his studies with Labat at Paris, he pioneered also in conduction anaesthesia. He appears to have been the first to institute prostatectomy by the transurethral route. Quite early in his career he became associated with the Toronto Western Hospital, eventually as surgeon in charge of the Department of Urology, a post he held with distinction until his retirement. By his industry and perseverance in the face of racial prejudices, he fashioned for himself a prominent place in medical circles of his native city.

Dr. Willinsky acknowledges that by being obliged to secure his post-graduate training abroad, his failure to obtain internship at Toronto proved to be a blessing. Any bitterness which he may have felt is perhaps reflected in the circumstance that in these memoirs he has few kind things to say of his Alma Mater and of those members of the profession prominent in his early days in the teaching hospitals of Toronto. It is natural that most of his encomiums were reserved chiefly for members of the staff of the Western Hospital, men with whom he was most closely associated.

Autobiography is not the easiest of literary endeavours and this one has a few minor defects. It is a rambling story digressing here and therein its themes. Nevertheless, the book provides interesting reading for both lay persons and the medical profession. In the final chapter, included as an appendix, the author provides his readers with recordings of recent conversations he had with his aged father for whom he had great reverence. For this reviewer, this was one of the most interesting features of the book.

HJ.S.