BOOK REVIEWS

It is a book which can be read equally well by doctors who engage in the teaching of first aid, either in or out of industry, more particularly still by those who judge first aid competitions, using out-of-date principles and a plethora of detail which is not only unpractical, but often downright dangerous.

R. A. TREVETHICK

Emergency War Surgery: N.A.T.O. Handbook. (Pp. 411.) Washington: U.S. Department of Defence. 1960. This excellent little book contains a mass of information concerning the organization and treatment of the war injured. It has been prepared by a committee consisting, among others, of three surgeons, American, British, and French, and represents modern British ideas on war surgery. Most of the work is based on results from World War II but the war in Korea provided much new data, particularly in regard to vascular surgery. Each chapter contains a reference to the treatment of mass casualties which might result from a future war, when only the less severe injuries could be dealt with.

There are chapters on various types of burns, injuries from cold, and prolonged immersion; other chapters describe chemical and radiation injuries, and new treatment. Part II is devoted to shock, metabolic disturbances, renal failure, and the treatment of wounds by debridement and antibiotics. Gas gangrene and tetanus are described together with their treatment. It is a little surprising that in the latter no mention is made of continuous anaesthesia.

In Part III wound management is described in detail including sorting and evacuation of the casualties. Under the section on anaesthesia it is surprising to see spinal anaesthesia mentioned as most surgeons feel this method increases the shock to the injured. Not many surgeons in this country would agree with the statement "a tourniquet should always be placed about the limb before surgery of the extremity is undertaken".

In Part IV specialized injuries to the head, chest, abdomen, and joints are all well described; all should be moved to special centres as early as possible.

Finally, there is a useful glossary of drugs used in the U.S.A., U.K., and France and a series of conversion tables.

The book is packed with good, sound advice and none of the lessons from the last World War have been forgotten.

G. P. ARDEN

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Book reviews are not precluded by notice here of books recently received.)