VII

BOOK REVIEW

GONOCOCCAL INFECTION IN THE MALE. By Abr. L. Wolbarst, M.D.
Second Edition. Pp. 297, with 140 Illustrations, including 7

The second edition of this work has been largely re-written. The
work "is intended for the active practitioner, whose sole task is the
cure of his patient," and as a result of this "particular emphasis is
centred upon diagnosis and therapy." In view of this statement in
the preface we regret to see the author advocating the use of Methylene
Blue for the staining of gonococcal films. In the case of a general
practitioner or specialist dealing with gonococcal infection, a differen-
tial stain is now recognised as essential. The practitioner also might
receive more assistance if the author incorporated in the text some
instructions as to how to take a specimen for culture in cases of doubtful
diagnosis.

In Chapter VI. the author advocates the use of the Asepto Bulb
Syringe, and prefers instillation with this type of instrument to Janet’s
method of lavage. His reasons for so doing are the greater risk of
traumatising the urethra by the gravity method. In our experience
trauma can occur with either method, and we doubt if the author is
justified in condemning Janet’s method of lavage for this reason alone.
If the posterior urethra requires irrigation he prefers the Carleton
irrigation syringe, which in his opinion gives the operator better con-
tral of the fluid and lessens the risk of complications. We are glad to
note that he is against the introduction of a catheter in any acute
urethral infection.

In dealing with the complications of gonococcal infection, Dr.
Wolbarst recommends Belfield’s method of vasotomy, not only as a
curative measure for prostatic and vesicular involvement, but as a
prophylactic against the development of other complications. We
doubt if many workers in this country will agree with him in this.
He is of opinion that vesiculitis is rarely cured and practically always
requires operative treatment.

In dealing with arthritis, the author states that vasotomy is the
basic treatment for all cases of arthritis, and that anything else is
merely palliative. In this and in many of the other methods of treat-
ment advocated the author shows a fondness for surgical interference,
which many clinicians find unnecessary and ineffective.

The chapter on stricture is well written and the illustrations of
urethroscopy are extremely good.

In writing on tests of cure the author is somewhat unconvincing and
some of his statements if carried out in practice would tend to create
sexual neurasthenia. A patient, for example, cannot be expected, as
suggested by the author, to assume the responsibility of marriage
himself.

On reading through this text-book we formed the opinion that it is
rather beyond the scope of the general practitioner. Further, it reflects a modern tendency to make simple matters an elaborate procedure. It is, however, of definite value in bringing before readers the viewpoint of the American specialist, and in giving us a detailed statement of the methods he has found effective in his practice. In a future edition the author could with advantage give more practical details of many of the lines of treatment advocated, as this would undoubtedly be of value to the general practitioner.

The book is printed on excellent paper, the illustrations are good, and the subject-matter is very well arranged.

D. L.