

## Medical Pioneer

HUGH YOUNG. *A Surgeon's Autobiography*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1940. 554 pp., with index. \$5.

Reviewed by EUGENE DE SAVITSCH

IN the medical world Hugh Young is invariably spoken of in capital letters. He holds a place second to none in the field of urology, and his contributions to diagnosis and surgical treatment over the last forty years form a shining star in the crown of the Johns Hopkins Hospital. Without further words (or without any words beyond the announcement of publication) this book will attract a considerable audience from doctors and would-be doctors, who will find special interest in Dr. Young's descriptions of the treatments and operative procedures which he considers essentially his own. Through these records the author succeeds in giving not only a good account of himself but an excellent picture of the step-by-step evolution of all surgery from a basic conception to a precise technique. A distinct textbook flavor, however, will be sure to discourage many a lay reader unless it is understood at the start that the bulk of the technical material has been wisely segregated in the middle of the book, where it can be skipped if the going becomes too heavy.

Dr. Young's story goes back in time to include a few robust exploits by his grandfather in Texas during the pre-Mexican War era, when a gun was as indispensable with a frock coat and high silk hat as with a hunting outfit. Further brief glimpses of a day that is gone emerge from the account which the author gives of his father's life in the Confederate Army and of his subsequent return to Texas where, "It was bad form to ask anyone where he came from, or why. . . . The Civil War had liberated great numbers of soldiers who would not live under the carpet-baggers in the South. Many still refused to swear allegiance to the United States, and entered the army of Maximilian."

The author's own life in medical pioneering has been as exciting in its way as that of his fighting father and grandfather. His profession occupies the central place in his story but he includes also the tangents, visits to South America, India, Mexico, and Hawaii, interludes of fishing, hunting, and otherwise enjoying the natural blessings of Maryland; a succession of legislative coups and civic promotions for raising the standard of civilized life in Maryland. Several chapters are devoted to Dr. Young's work and observations with the Medical Corps of the A.E.F. in Europe during and after



From the drawing by William Orpen  
Dr. Hugh Young

the World War. His candid discussion of the realistic manner in which venereal diseases were dealt with (in the face of convincing evidence that purity crusades were not highly regarded by soldiers whose days might be numbered) recalls Dr. Parrin's courageous campaign. Humorous anecdotes are plentiful; not all of them are as chaste as the one about the author's visit to Buckingham Palace when he asked a servant for Haig and Haig and was served with the Cockney translation—two boiled eggs.

Sketches of Dr. Young's famous patients and friends are scattered through the book. Diamond Jim Brady appears in his usual colorful personality and also as a great boon to Johns Hopkins University. (The Brady Institute, despite an inadequate endowment, provided Dr. Young with permanent facilities for carrying on his work.) Other well known persons, including Woodrow Wilson, figure most prominently as medical case histories, proving that charity wards have no monopoly on interesting symptoms. Dr. Young is sometimes disappointingly cursory; occasionally his subject matter is of limited interest, but a book so rich in unusual and varied material can afford a few minor flaws.

Dr. Eugene de Savitsch is the author of the recently published *"In Search of Complications."*

### ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Tennyson: "To Virgil."
2. Swinburne: "Christopher Marlowe."
3. Meredith: "The Spirit of Shakespeare."
4. Wordsworth: "London, 1802." (To Milton.)
5. Byron: "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." (To Crabbe.)
6. Shelley: "To Wordsworth."
7. Arnold: "Memorial Verses." (To Byron.)
8. Rossetti: "John Keats."
9. Landor: "To Robert Browning."
10. Hardy: "George Meredith."

## Modern Hospital

BELLEVUE. By Lorraine Maynard in collaboration with Laurence Missall, M.D. New York: Julian Messenger, Inc. 1940. 280 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by BERTRAM D. LEWIN, M.D.

THIS book is written in a worthy cause. It is written against the garish view, dear to the morbid and the sensational, of Bellevue as a place of horror and misery, tempered by the "romance" of medicine. The authors set out to tell the truth about Bellevue Hospital. It turns out that the people who go to Bellevue are as varied and as human as any others, and that in this vast, quickly turned-over population there are all the "dramas" that one can require, from the simple and humorous to the shockingly sensational. The background provided for the very poor sick of New York is a crack modern, scientifically administered hospital, and the best story this book has to tell is of the people in Bellevue and how they react to this civilized institution.

They react in every way, more openly than in most other places, and the difficulty of humanity in the mass, the sick, the poor, and the alien, in adjusting itself to what civilization and science have determined is best for it, becomes clamant. Those who academically plan out just how society should go about bringing medical aid to the community have much to learn from this book, for nowhere has it been so clearly shown that reason and organization, science and sociology, will fail unless the psychological set-up of the patient is taken into account. With all its excellence, Bellevue is constantly running into superstition, ignorance, and stupidity that must be overcome before any rational procedure can be instituted. That the hospital faces this as a familiar problem is evident from this book, where it is strikingly illustrated in many "human interest stories."

Besides the human and sociological interest, the reader obtains a very good picture, well illustrated in much detail, of the inner workings of a great modern hospital. What Bellevue really is and does is presented to offset the obsolescent prejudice and fear that its name unfortunately connotes for many people, largely for historical reasons, the shadow of a vague tradition that still surrounds the "Ritz for the bums." The frankly journalistic style of the book detracts in no way from its effect or purpose, which is that of honest reporting.

Bertram D. Lewin collaborated on a translation of Fenichel's *"Outline of Clinical Psychoanalysis."*

## Baltimore Surgeon

A *SURGEON'S LIFE: The Autobiography of J. M. T. Finney*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1940. 395 pp., with index. \$3.50.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

ON May 7, 1889 the eyes of all alert young medical men were turned towards Baltimore. It was the day of the formal opening of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Not only was this the first time in American history that a medical institution free from tradition had been turned over to a group of young scientists, but their leaders were all known to have been trained in the theories and principles of the new order—the order precipitated by the discoveries of Pasteur, Koch, Virchow, and only just emerging on this side of the Atlantic. It was a gala occasion for visiting young medicos, but to no one was it more fateful than to twenty-six year old John Finney who had journeyed down from Boston's Massachusetts General with a letter to Dr. Halsted in his pocket and a prayer in his heart. Letter and prayer prevailed, and he returned to Boston with the coveted appointment on the new hospital's surgical staff. Thus began the association that was to determine the young doctor's destiny and to remain uninterrupted for more than fifty years.

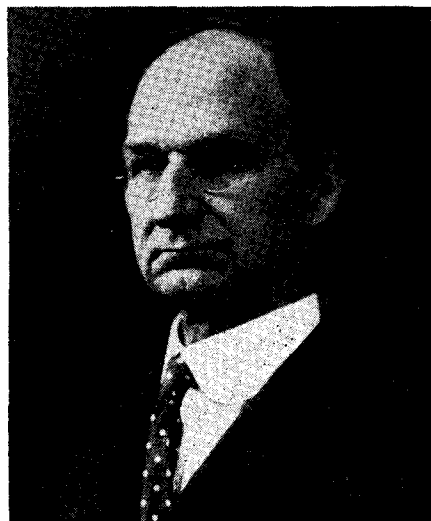
Dr. Finney attributes much of the good fortune that has been his to his forbears. His was, as he says "a goodly heritage," for he came from "Scotch-Irish and English stock, long-lived, God-fearing, well educated, and public spirited." His father was a country parson with the usual meagre salary, but blessed with many relatives and devoted friends who among them provided not only a happy childhood for his motherless son, but the best education the country afforded for an aspiring physician. At Princeton young Finney became more famed for football than scholastic prowess; he rowed in the college crew, wrestled, enjoyed himself hugely. Then came three fruitful years at the Harvard Medical School and the excitement of newly awakened intellectual interests and of friendships destined to be lifelong; graduation and appointment on the Resident Surgical Staff of the Massachusetts General Hospital. And then Baltimore.

After a year with Johns Hopkins it became necessary to consider earning a living. Dr. Finney hung out his shingle and divided his time between his work at the hospital and waiting for patients to come to his office. But they came very slowly. "The first year my professional income amounted to just slightly over \$200." But as the

years went on his practice grew, until it included every type of patient, even such distinguished personages, as Theodore Roosevelt and his daughter, and President and Mrs. Wilson. He contributed greatly to the high standing of the Johns Hopkins Medical School, for thirty-eight years he assisted the unique Dr. William Halsted of whom he tells many amusing stories, he found time to serve on civic and educational projects, he was offered and rejected the presidency of Princeton University. When the First World War broke out, he became director of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Unit, and before the war was over he had been made Brigadier General and was the Chief Consultant in Surgery to the A.E.F.

But personal accomplishments to Dr. Finney were merely a part of the day's work. Never was a man freer of egoism. He obviously had a genius for friendship, and as he reviews his long, happy life it is the memories of these friends, his family, colleagues, students, and patients that give him the greatest pleasure. His intimate portraits of Johns Hopkins's Big Four, Osler, Halsted, Welch, and Kelly, will delight all who knew this extraordinary quartet. His story abounds in anecdotes, many amusing, some significant, some trifling, but all told in the easy, informal manner we associate with a pipe and an open fire. The net result is a lovable, folksy book, the tale of a happy man to whom human relations are supremely important. Dr. Finney is assured of a niche in America's Medical Hall of Fame. But that he is probably the most widely beloved of any surgeon of his times he owes to attributes other than professional—to his sunny nature and the expansive generosity of his spirit, qualities reflected again and again in this his autobiography.

Mabel S. Ulrich is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins Medical School.



Dr. Arthur E. Hertzler

## Toward a Longer Life

*THE DOCTOR AND HIS PATIENTS: The American Domestic Scene as viewed by the Family Doctor*. By Arthur E. Hertzler, M.D. Harper & Brothers. 1940. 316 pp. \$2.25.

Reviewed by MURRAY BASS, M.D.

THE real aim of the book is to present to the reader a rather lurid picture of the American family; lurid, insofar as it is seen in the blinding glare thrown upon it by the physician's flashlight. Dr. Hertzler leads us through life, beginning with childhood, then adolescence, youth, courtship, and marriage.

It is interesting to note that many times in the book Dr. Hertzler stresses the fact that love and sex need not be closely connected. Thus he says: "It might help a little if people could get the very obvious fact into their fool heads that the sex act has nothing to do with love."

The place of the child not only in the family and its relation to its parents but also its place in the world greatly interests the author. His plea for a better understanding of childhood and youth is splendid. The chapters on the bringing up of our children and the child-parent relationship might well be read by all parents. He is quite alive to the fact that the parents of today have much to learn from their children and he emphasizes what so many educators, social-workers, and physicians realize, namely, that when we blame children and young folks for conduct which we deplore, we have overlooked the fact that it is we, the adults, who have permitted childhood to become polluted by environment and conditions which we ourselves have failed to correct. As the author says: "The moral atmosphere which surrounds our young people is measured by a commercial yardstick." It is therefore incumbent upon us to change our whole tone of life so that our young people will grow up healthier in mind and spirit,—it is by emphasizing the improvement of the child that we may hope to improve the race. "If we can but get the idea that the highest things in life are exemplified by the child, and that sex, a necessary thing, is inimical to the highest sentiments which the human being is capable of reaching, we will see a new civilization."

It was of interest to the reviewer to note the complete absence of any reference to the psychologist or psychoanalyst in this book. The treatment of all the ailing people who passed through its pages seem to have been with sedatives and homely, old fashioned common sense advice. Perhaps that is best. Who knows?