The author first gives an excellent review of the historical development of stabilisation procedures and tendon transfers in the treatment of paralytic foot deformities. There follows an account of the pathogenesis of these deformities. The author's view that pes cavus is due to intrinsic weakness would not be universally accepted.

The main part of the work is a clinical review of 211 feet operated on by twenty-five different surgeons, under the general direction of the late Professor F. Langenskiöld. The majority were treated by a combination of triple arthodesis and tendon transfer. The results were assessed by personal observation in 147 cases and on replies to a questionnaire in the remainder. Over the whole series 67·8 per cent of feet showed improvement; in the author's view 70·6 per cent of the failures were due to avoidable faults. The proportion of failures was highest among the feet with varus and equino-varus deformities, and lowest in those treated by Lambrinudi's drop-foot operation.

The main positive value of tendon transfer was seen in cases of equinus and equino-valgus deformity, where transfer of the peroneal to the dorsum gave a useful power of active dorsiflexion in many cases. The negative virtue of preventing recurrent deformity was not clearly demonstrated. In only two cases was an undesirable effect of the tendon transfer noted.

One of the largest single causes of failure was non-union. Although the author does not think so, one wonders whether this can be attributed to the policy of doing the triple arthodesis and the tendon transfer at the same operation.

This review is believed to be the only one of a large series of combined stabilisation and tendon transfer operations, and as such is of great importance to all who are interested in the problem of paralytic foot deformities.—Michael Pilcher.


Dr Warren's book is an expansion of an outline prepared some time ago for the guidance of his Residents and contains, besides some instructional material, matters relating to policy, informational items, and "some sermonising" as he says.

He defines his field of vascular surgery as one where the surgeon performs intrathoracic, extracardiac vascular procedures and peripheral ones, but leaves cardiac surgery to another. The author describes only one method for each procedure without claiming its superiority but because he has found it effective.

The book might be divided into three—arterial operations, amputations and venous operations. Thirty-one operations are described. Each is made apparently simple by beautiful line and wash diagrams which must be extremely useful to the young operator. The letterpress is adequate without useless padding. The objective, the indications and contra-indications, the planning, the operation and after-treatment are written up in a few lines. The reviewer has nostalgic memories of the first lesion described—a co-arctation of the aorta. It is interesting to see the continual advances that are made in these operations, particularly newer methods by artificial replacements to restore continuity.

The section on amputations is well done, but it is interesting to see that Syme's amputation is not carried out as Syme did it, though it is good that the importance of retaining the position of the heel flap is emphasised. In amputating at the thigh the deep fascia is sutured but not the muscles, though current thought, especially of limb-makers, is that the extensors and flexors should be stitched to each other. There is a good section on early walking after amputation. The author recommends walking by the eighteenth day. It must be a shock for British limb-makers to read—"10th day: Temporary artificial limb arrives."

This is a well produced volume and as far as it goes will be of great use. The drawings are most instructive.—Walter Mercer.


The seventeenth volume of Clinical Orthopaedics has just been published. The book is designed for the publication of original articles offering significant contributions to the advancement of surgery. This issue is published as part of the celebration of the seventy-second birthday of Franklin Chambers McLean and the contributors are all associates or pupils of his, working on the frontiers of the field of bone.