of the "skin cup." The after-care was the same as for a cup arthroplasty. This in general was very much shorter than after the equivalent operation in this country, most of the patients being discharged from the hospital to exercise at home after six weeks. With this régime almost 70 per cent of patients were stated to be very satisfied or satisfied, and 30 per cent uncertain or dissatisfied. Prosthetic replacement gave the best results: there was very little to choose between those of skin arthroplasty and the Vitallium mould operation.

For those who are concerned in the treatment of the stiff hip this book provides yet another sidelight on the problem. It is certainly interesting to know that skin arthroplasty is a possibility; but the fact that an operation can be performed is no criterion of its practical use, and there will have to be a much longer period of observation before the operation can be considered anything more than an experimental procedure.—J. N. WILSON.

DIE PROGNOSE DER WIRBELSÄULENLEIDEN. Prognosis in Vertebral Disease—A review of its occupational significance. By Prof. Dr J. E. W. BROCHER, Genf. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ in. Pp. viii+67, with 45 figures. 1957. Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. Price DM 12.80.

Social insurance has enormously increased the importance of disease and accidents affecting employability. The efficiency of the vertebral column in relation to the work chosen is a fundamental item of knowledge in placing a worker correctly and avoiding adjustment later. Increasing knowledge of vertebral pathology is in danger of outrunning its practical application. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the study of spondylolisthesis. It is apparent that this condition is much more common than has formerly been suspected, and that it often only manifests itself in the second and third decades, by which time a man has chosen his work and been trained in it. Discovery frequently forces a change of employment which may necessitate expensive retraining and social readjustment, often a difficult and trying experience.

The size of the problem has been emphasised by recent figures reviewing the spinal condition in uncomplaining heavy workers. In 4,654, Runge found pathological changes in 25 per cent. Allen and Lindem in 3,000 cases found 13 per cent with degenerative changes (osteoarthritis) and 2.96 per cent with spondylolisthesis. Marsh and Rombold in 572 candidates for work found only 63.8 per cent with normal spines: sacralisation of the last lumbar vertebra was found in 7.7 per cent, narrowing of the lumbo-sacral disc in 7.7 per cent and spondylolisthesis in 4.4 per cent.

This volume reviews the effects of spinal disease on employability, and to a lesser extent its influence on accident liability and compensation, and ends with a plea for routine examination before training for employment. In view of the fact that in mass radiography of the chest only some 4 per cent of significant abnormalities are found, it would seem reasonable that the same method should be applied to the spine. While figures cannot adequately be compared from a selected group of workers, the probabilities are that a far higher percentage of abnormalities would be discovered in routine mass radiography of the lumbar spine, than in mass radiography of the chest.

This is primarily a volume for the Industrial Medical Officer and for those interested in social insurance and preventive medicine. It suggests more than it proves, but it points to the goal towards which the combined fields of orthopaedics, radiology and social medicine are slowly pressing, namely a complete health assessment as the basis of employment; not to each according to his needs but to each according to his health.—J. G. BONNIN.

ANAESTHESIA. British Medical Bulletin, Volume 14, Number 1, January 1958, with twenty-two contributors. $11\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ in. Pp. xv+72, with 29 figures and numerous tables. 1958. London: Medical Department of the British Council. Paper cover. Price 20s.

It is twelve years since the publication of the last British Medical Bulletin on anaesthesia. Comparison between the contents of the two emphasises the changes that have taken place. Increased complexity of new anaesthetic methods has called for greater collaboration between anaesthetist, pharmacologist, physicist and biochemist, and this trend is reflected in the articles presented.

The bulletin consists of seventeen articles contributed by different writers. About one-third deal with the conduct of anaesthesia. Five are concerned with biochemistry in relation to anaesthesia, and three with physics as applied to anaesthesia. Muscle relaxation is dealt with in two articles—one on the myoneural action of anaesthetic drugs, and the other on the present theory of the action of muscle relaxants. The present position of hypothermia is described, and in the same paper the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest is clearly and concisely outlined. The treatment of respiratory