Surgery in World War II. Neurosurgery. Volume II. Edited by R. Glen SPURLING, M.D., and Barnes WOODHALL, M.D., with eighteen other contributors. Prepared and published under the direction of Major-General S. B. HAYS, the Surgeon General, United States Army. Editor-in-Chief: Colonel John Boyd COATES, Jun., M.C. $10 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in. Pp. xxvi+705, with 286 figures (some in colour) and many tables. Index. 1959. Washington: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. Price \$7.00.

The second volume on Neurosurgery in this series produced by the Medical Department of the United States Army deals with spinal and peripheral nerve injuries. An excellent and smaller first volume was concerned with the organisation of the wartime neurosurgical services and with head injuries.

Of the almost 600 pages of text (excluding appendices, etc.) in this second volume, over one-third deal with spinal injuries and the remainder with those of peripheral nerves. The former section is concerned with injuries of the spinal cord itself; the skeletal injuries that may occasion it, and which are identical with those of civilian practice, are not considered. Cord injuries constituted 12 per cent of the neurosurgical casualties in the European theatre of operations, and the treatment of missile wounds is fully considered with emphasis upon the details of nursing care and the organisation of evacuation. The urological aspects of paraplegia are discussed in detail, and it is of interest that closed vesicle drainage with manual control (the Dukes apparatus of this country) was found to be more practicable than automatic (tidal) drainage. There is an excellent account of the work of the paraplegia centres established in the United States. The maintenance of the patients' nutrition, care of decubitus ulcers and the late management of bladder and bowel function are described, and a full account of the programme of physical reconditioning is presented. There is interesting information upon the resettlement of these patients from Veterans' Administration hospitals—the provision of a suitably equipped automobile and architecturally modified home formed an impressive part of this programme. Such provision, as well as the attitude of those caring for these terribly handicapped men, must have done much to support morale and been of inestimable value to the patient and his family. The goal of those in charge of these patients is well summed up in the aphorism: "having added years to the lives of traumatic paraplegics, we must now above all add life to their years."

In the comprehensive section dealing with peripheral nerve injuries one chapter reviews the anatomy of the commonly injured nerves and another the standard methods of investigation. The technique of nerve repair is clearly described. Other chapters deal with nerve injuries associated with severe soft-tissue defects, vascular injuries and severe bone injury. The problem of causalgia is well reviewed and the value of the appropriate sympathectomy in its relief described. A most valuable chapter deals with the correlation of clinical and pathological changes occurring at the site of the lesion in a series of 228 nerve injuries. From this study it is considered that the main obstacle to nerve regeneration is fibrosis. While scar tissue surrounding the site of nerve section and fibrosis in the nerve at the site of injury have obvious importance in this connection it is stressed that fibrosis within the nerve secondary to degeneration of nerve fibres has an importance not generally realised—and it can be prevented by effecting nerve suture as soon as possible after the extent of the lesion has become demarcated; that is usually about three weeks after injury.

Not the least valuable feature of this excellent volume is the further indication it provides of the importance of organisation in not only teaching and research but in therapy itself.—J. E. A. O'CONNELL.

Man's Posture. Electromyographic Studies. By J. JOSEPH, M.D., M.R.C.O.G., Reader in Anatomy, Guy's Hospital Medical School, London. With an introduction by H. Jackson BURROWS, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.S. 9×6 in. Pp. x+88, with 23 figures. Index. 1960. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd. Toronto: The Ryerson Press. Price 44s.

The first half of this book contains general statements about man's erect posture and an elementary account of the apparatus used in simple electromyography. The more complicated problems such as those concerned with isometric and isotonic contractions, and the uses of action-potential counts, are not discussed. The second half gives an account of the behaviour of the muscles controlling the ankles, hips and knees in certain conditions, the findings of a number of previous investigators, and a summary of the author's own observations when using surface electrodes.

The conclusions, and these seem to be the purpose of the book, are that posture when standing at ease is maintained at the ankles and spine by muscular action, and at the knees and hips by ligaments. It may well be, as the author and others have found, that action-potentials cannot often be recorded in the buttock muscles when standing at ease (there seemed to be plenty in my own gluteus medius