

BOOK REVIEW

Pain Mechanisms. By W. K. LIVINGSTON, Lieut. Comdr., M. C., U. S. N. R. Pp. 253. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943. Price, cloth, \$3.75.

This monograph by Dr. Livingston presents the problems of the interpretation of causalgia and its related states in a very interesting manner. His style of writing resembles classroom discussion. The anesthesiologist who includes therapeutic nerve blocks in his practice will find the book particularly valuable. Dr. Livingston believes that the patient is not necessarily psychoneurotic who complains of bizarre pain patterns. By continued study of pain mechanisms, he believes that we will eventually find the complete explanation for the puzzling case whose manifestations do not conform to established ideas on the anatomy of peripheral nerve pathways.

There is a sufficient amount of anatomy, physiology, and psychology of pain pathways in the first section of the book to bring the reader "up-to-date" so that he can follow Dr. Livingston

in his clinical approach to the numerous problems. By case histories, including frank evaluation of the treatments instituted, the author discusses the clinical syndromes of causalgia, post-traumatic pain, chronic low back disability, facial neuralgias, and phantom limb pain.

The use of procaine in the diagnosis, study, and treatment of various conditions is emphasized. It is noted, in passing, that the author persists in using the trade name "novocaine" throughout. The injection of trigger points with procaine once or several times is stressed, as oftentimes long periods of relief from widespread reflex pain will result.

In his summary, the author states that his book "is a personal record of impressions derived from the work of many investigators and my own observation of pain syndromes over a period of years." This reviewer was impressed by the open-minded attitude expressed by Dr. Livingston, and the singular freedom from dogmatic statements in the monograph.

FREDERICK P. HAUGEN, M.D.