

## ***Book Reviews***

**The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy.** Tenth Edition.  
New York. Merck Sharp & Dohme Research Laboratories.  
1961. Pp. vii + 1907. Price 60s.

Many practitioners may not be familiar with the *Merck Manual*. For its size it is probably the most comprehensive manual of its kind. Its twenty one main sections, all of which have been revised and brought up to date since the last edition, bring together a fund of information on nearly all medical disorders. As a quick and ready reference book nothing could be better.

For the British practitioner the comprehensive section on prescriptions may not be so useful as the other sections. The section on adrenocortical and related therapy is certainly valuable though some might take exception to the conditions for the treatment of which it is mentioned as being useful. In particular psoriasis, tinea curis and pedis are unlikely to benefit. This however is a small point. For £3 0s. 0d. this book is extremely good value.

**Diseases of the Nose, Throat and Ear (Logan Turner).** 6th edition.  
Editors JOHN P. STEWART, M.D., F.R.C.S. and R. B. LUMSDEN,  
T.D., M.B., F.R.C.S. Bristol. John Wright and Sons Ltd. 1961.  
Pp. 508. Price 52s. 6d.

This book is the work of seven surgeons and is well edited to produce a coherent whole, with very little evidence of contradictory views. It is an excellent reference book for general practitioners with a special interest in these diseases. Naturally, it has a surgical bias, which is seen in the meticulous descriptions of surgical operations which often compare unfavourably with the more casual approach to medical treatment, wherein the dose of drug or length of treatment are sometimes omitted.

The anatomy and physiology of the nose, throat and ear are clearly described and easily understood, except in the section on the inner ear, where a few sentences were not readily grasped by this reviewer. For example, under "Motion Sickness" one sentence reads—"linear acceleration is the only force acting on a two-point suspension swing which exceeds the threshold of labyrinthine stimulation". Perhaps that is for the registrar to whom this book will also be of considerable value.

For each disease, symptoms, prognosis, differential diagnosis, and

treatment are given, and the illustrations in the main are very helpful.

It would be churlish to be hypercritical of an excellent book, so the following remarks are intended as helpful criticism. An irritation to some readers will be the occurrence of such phrases as "King suggested. . .", "Mangus pointed out. . .", "Mygind proposed. . ." without the help of references or bibliography, which might well be given at the end of the chapters. Among the 18 coloured reproductions of conditions of the larynx it would be helpful to have one of a normal larynx for comparison. There are a few statements which came as a mild surprise; for instance, that a single dietary indiscretion can cause an attack of laryngitis and that otalgia may follow sexual disturbances, and nose blowing and douching are recommended for children with colds and maxillary sinusitis.

The book is well printed and easy to read. Only one minor spelling error was observed—a single "l" in "non-ampullated" on p. 321.

**Lecture Notes on Diseases of the Ear, Nose and Throat.** E. H. MILES FOXON, F.R.C.S., D.L.O. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1961. Pp. vii + 186. Price 18s. 6d.

This book is constructed from lecture notes and is intended for the use of students, general practitioners, and house officers. It is written by a surgeon and has a strong surgical bias. The common (and many rarer) diseases of the ear, nose, and throat are tabulated, as are the recommended lines of treatment.

A number of questions from recent final examination papers are appended and the book is designed to help the student in his attack upon them. This design may be achieved where a short answer is required and probably this is all that is intended. For a general practitioner or house officer, who is faced with the treatment of a simple condition of which he has no practical experience, this book will provide a ready source of help. For example, it will bring to mind all the common causes of hoarseness, but, as the course of the recurrent laryngeal nerves is not described, he will be left in the dark as to why the list of causes of left recurrent laryngeal paresis differs from that of the right.

The medical side of this subject is lightly touched upon. Less space is given to nasal allergy, or nasal catarrh, than is given to tumours of the nose, sinuses and nasopharynx. Perhaps this is as well, for the chapter on nasal catarrh is likely to be found unconvincing by many general practitioners. In many conditions drugs are recommended, but dosage is scarcely mentioned.

It is extremely difficult to condense a subject of such importance