

which will prove useful to medical students. Although intended for students this book will be good value for money to any general practitioner who wishes to refresh his knowledge of modern gynaecology.

**Electrocardiography.** S. G. OWEN, M.D., F.R.C.P. London. The English University Press Ltd. 1966. Pp. 180. Price 40s. 0d.

When the control of the medical schools by the General Medical Council was relaxed, Newcastle on Tyne moved ahead with speed in modifying the curriculum and introducing modern teaching methods. This book, which is an example, is a programmed text for self-tuition in the principles of electrocardiography and the interpretation of electrocardiograms. It is divided into four sections and the instruction is scrambled . . . that is, it cannot be read straight through like a conventional textbook. At the end of each section multiple choice questions are asked and depending on the reader's answer he is directed to another section on a different page. When the answer is correct he proceeds; when wrong, explanation is given and he is referred back to the previous section which clearly requires further thought. The method ensures that reading is slow and deliberate. For those of us who have grown accustomed to reading quickly and rather cursorily it is a salutary experience and a pleasant reminder that we are still able to learn if we would only take the trouble.

At first it is a little distracting to be referred from section to section, backwards and forwards through the book, and on putting the book down it is not enough to remember the page number, one must also note the last section read, otherwise it is difficult to find the place. These minor disadvantages are inseparable from the method of teaching and are soon accepted as a small price to pay for the very real advantages.

The book is well illustrated and is exceptional for the clarity with which the theory and practice of electrocardiography are presented. There is a good index and the book can be used for reference in the ordinary way.

Group practices are increasing in number and in most the need for an electrocardiograph becomes apparent sooner or later. The doctor who makes himself responsible for the electrocardiography needs training and experience which cannot be obtained by self-tuition, but the others who require rather less competence seldom find just the book they need. No other book on electrocardiography reviewed in this *Journal* can compare, even remotely, with this as a medium for self-tuition or be so strongly recommended to the general practitioner.

**A guide to cardiology.** Second edition. J. C. LEONARD, M.D., M.R.C.P., and E. G. GALEA, M.R.C.P., M.R.A.C.P. Edinburgh and London. E. and S. Livingstone Ltd. 1966. Pp. xii+306. Price 35s. 0d.

The first edition of this book, published in 1961, was very favourably reviewed in this journal. It has now been extensively re-written and brought up to date. The sections on electrocardiography, cardiac catheterization,

the arrhythmias and congenital heart disease have been enlarged and this edition contains 40 more pages. It costs 7s. 6d. more.

It is intended for students, resident medical officers and general practitioners who need a fuller presentation of the subject than is given by the text books of general medicine. It fulfills this purpose admirably and is well written in a clear and forthright style. There is no room for argument in a book of this size; the authors make unequivocal statements and avoid the discussion of pros and cons. It inspires confidence and seems to contain just what the 'general' general practitioner needs to know. The stress is on physical signs, bedside diagnosis and home management, with sufficient information on modern cardiological techniques to enable the general practitioner to appreciate what can be done for the patient in modern cardiac units.

As more group practices are formed, more general practitioners are becoming interested in cardiology and do their own electrocardiography. Although they require larger text books giving greater detail, this one is a valuable acquisition and is too modestly described as a guide.

It is very well produced, copiously illustrated, has a good index and is a convenient size.

**Backache in women.** Second edition. E. SCHLEYER-SAUNDERS, M.D., F.I.C.S. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1966. Pp. 90. Price 21s.

The author of this book had had the most valuable experience of all before writing on backache. In the first sentence of the preface to the first edition he claims experience of pain in his own back. The subject matter of the book covers backache in men as well as in women, save for the first chapter on gynaecological backache, but the author's understanding of the postural as well as the physiological and pathological difficulties of a woman's life makes an unusually useful short book. The brief foreword by the late Professor W. C. W. Nixon emphasizes this. The introduction reveals this general approach to the problem of 'The Back'. The value of the patient's story in her own words, especially of the onset of pain, her movements in sitting and undressing, the shoes and the belt that she wears are all included. A family history of backache, the result of skeletal pattern and especially of long femurs is not referred to, nor is the risk of flat heels worn on holiday in middle age, though the disadvantage of undue height of heel and ill-fitting shoes generally is emphasized.

It is to be expected that a gynaecologist gives full and sympathetic review of pelvic sources of backache, but the orthopaedic section of the book is equally useful and the rheumatic one has good suggestions. Causes of backache in pregnancy and the puerperium due to postural and tissue changes are well surveyed, and there is careful analysis of the risks of rotation when one leg at a time is placed in the lithotomy position, and of the exaggerated lumbar curve, causing pain, that can result from unsuitable stirrups. The chapter on intervertebral disc lesions has been rewritten for this edition, with clear diagrams and discussion of differential diagnosis and choice of treatment including surgery. Not all readers will share the author's support for osteopathy; he has been at