

Handbook of medical treatment. Tenth edition. MILTON J. CHATTON, M.D., SHELDON MARGEN, M.D. and HENRY BRAINERD, M.D. Los Altos, California. Lange Medical Publications. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1966. Pp. 726. Price 42s.

This is one of Lange series of lithographed books. Most people will be familiar with them and will, like the reviewer, find them extremely useful.

Though the last edition appeared only two years ago the rapid advances in therapeutic agents are clearly reflected on practically every page. It is, indeed, remarkable how up-to-date this book is. The handbook covers not only treatment, but also gives a convenient resumé on diagnosis, so that it is probably one of the most useful of this set.

It is a very useful reference book in the surgery and those who have never possessed a copy are advised to remedy this. There is perhaps no need to change every two years but, at its price, it is one of the "best buys" of 1967.

General urology. Fifth edition. DONALD R. SMITH, M.D. Los Altos, California. Lange Medical Publications. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1966. Pp. 726. Price 42s. 0d.

This book is stated by the author in his preface to have been written primarily for medical students and general practitioners rather than for the specialist urologist and it is true that there are certain aspects of urology which are not described in any sort of detail, for example, the technicalities of transurethral resection which could not interest anyone except a surgeon practising urology, but on the other hand there are many details, particularly minutiae of renal function tests which could be described as being almost too detailed for the general reader. The anatomical diagrams, although accurate are not pleasing and it is surprising that in a modern book emanating from the United States, that the anatomical diagrams are not in colour.

Much is made of the value of phenol red (PSP test), but although this is a useful and probably as accurate a test as any other, it gives no better indication of the state of the patient's renal function than the measurement of blood urea for all ordinary purposes, and although a formula is given for measuring by this method, the glomerular filtration rate, the clinician really wants to know the overall picture of renal function.

The chapter on medical tests of the kidneys is extremely brief, and in the opinion of the reviewer should either have been a good deal more detailed or left out altogether. With regard to x-ray examination of the urinary tract, although tomograms are mentioned, little attention is paid to them and this examination is simply carried out under modern conditions and must be regarded as invaluable and again under modern conditions, essential. The chapters on tumours of the kidney and ureter are very good, but the details of ureterography and the best methods of obtaining accurate pictures of tumours and other lesions of the ureter

are not mentioned. With regard to prostatic disorder, the chapter deals in a standard manner with the various conditions, but there is really nothing new and certainly in Great Britain transurethral prostatectomy is not the most common method for removal of the prostate gland used by the majority of British surgeons, and perineal prostatectomy which the author states involves little risk, is almost never practised in this country. The chapters on neurogenic disorders of the bladder are very helpful and clearly set out.

The book is not an easy one to read.

An introduction to electrocardiography. Third edition. L. SCHAMROTH, M.D., B.CH., M.R.C.P. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1966. Pp. x + 196. Price 20s. 0d.

The second edition of this book, published in 1964, was favourably reviewed in this journal and part of this review is reproduced on the cover of the third edition. The publication of a new edition so soon confirms the reviewer's high opinion. Many books of this type, designed primarily for the beginner, have been written and published in recent years, but this one is exceptional, especially because the subject is so completely covered. The shift of current practice is away from empirical to deductive interpretation of electrocardiograms and this is based on vector principles. Much of the new material added to this edition is an expansion of the vector principle and the book is thereby greatly improved. It contains 31 more pages than the previous edition but the general form and price are unchanged. It is very comprehensive, concisely written, adequately illustrated and well produced. It deserves the success which it has achieved.

Ophthalmology. KENNETH WYBAR, M.D., CH.M., D.O.M.S. Baillière, Tindall & Cassell. Concise Medical Textbooks. 25s. 0d.

This textbook is designed supposedly to provide a factual and concise account of modern ophthalmology for the medical student and general practitioner. As a rule ophthalmology is taught badly to medical students when far too much is expected of them in knowledge which will be of little use to them in later life unless they intend to practise this speciality. Conversely too little attempt is made to instruct the student in certain important eye conditions whose early recognition is of vital importance, e.g. iritis, acute glaucoma and squint in its early stages. The present volume falls into the same trap. Though small and concise it attempts too much with the result that, on reading it, the subject matter is treated in an even fashion without proper emphasis on the important conditions with which the average practitioner and physician should be concerned. Too much use is made of medical terminology so that clarity of expression is often lost. There is a useful chapter on the administrative care of the blind. The line illustrations are clear but the plates are poor. There is no doubt that good colour plates used to illustrate eye diseases are of immense value and the lack of these is noticeable.