

heritable factors that influence the association of hyperkeratosis of the palms and soles with enhanced liability, in certain families only, to the development of cancer of the oesophagus, is misleading in its condensation. The two references, only one of which appears in the index, state that "Tylosis palmaris or hyperkeratosis of the palms occurs in carcinoma of the oesophagus." The second describes tylosis palmaris as "thickening of the skin of the palms seen in carcinoma of the oesophagus." Both statements need revision if they are not seriously to mislead the reader.

There is no mention of malaria, and the blood diseases need a satisfactory section in a book of this type. The strongest chapters are on the respiratory system and on cardiology, and the section on neurology has excellent diagrams. The diseases of the thyroid are discussed in a most helpful chapter. Dr Davies translates the Greek words in the medical terminology, and in footnotes gives us the life-span and locations of workers whose names have, often unwisely, been substituted for descriptions of diseases. We learn on page 90 that Behçet's disease was described by "Hulusi Behçet (1889-1948) a Turkish dermatologist.", but we have to turn to another book to learn more.

Many will profit from reading this book, and enjoy the stimulus of accepting Dr Davies' invitation to write to him making suggestions of constructive criticism for its future.

Chemotherapy of chronic bronchitis and allied disorders. J. ROBERT MAY, M.D., F.C.Path. London. The English Universities Press Ltd. 1968. Pp. x+115. Price 35s. 0d.

Because chronic bronchitis is so common in this country, the treatment of the acute exacerbations which punctuate its course is one of the largest items in the workload of general practitioners during the winter months. The economic implications of this have not been lost upon the pharmaceutical industry. General practitioners are the target of a continuing barrage of claims made for this or that company's antibiotic. Each is supposed to have some special merit, and this is emphasized with a varying degree of subtle or disingenuous persuasion. We are led to believe that 'White-mycin' achieves higher and more rapid serum levels than any other broad-spectrum antibiotic. The overriding advantage of 'Dormycin', on the other hand, is that it has been reported to cause far fewer side-effects. Since the latter are allegedly due to monilial super-infection, 'Churchmycin' includes (at no extra cost) an anti-fungal agent. And, lest the general practitioner should be deterred from prescribing the most expensive antibiotic of them all 'alpha-3-Blindmycin', it is pointed out that one clinical trial (published in a rather obscure journal) showed such overwhelming advantages in the speed of recovery that the tax-payer would

actually benefit if it were prescribed more widely.

The confusion felt by many general practitioners in the face of all these conflicting claims of the pharmaceutical companies would be largely dispelled by reading this book. It presents an account of the present state of knowledge of the part which bacterial infection plays in chronic bronchitis. Based on the long experience of the author in the field of fundamental bacteriology and its clinical applications, the book is intended to be a guide to those doctors who are most concerned with the practical problems of the use of antibacterial drugs for the treatment of chronic bronchitis. In the reviewer's opinion, it succeeds in giving a balanced view of the whole subject. As the author points out, whereas in some diseases the impact of antibiotics has been a dramatic one, in chronic bronchitis the success of antibiotics is much less self-evident. Some of the reasons for their shortcomings in chronic bronchitis becomes clearer when one reads of the bacteriological problems involved and the limitations of all antibiotics in surmounting these. Since chronic bronchitis is pre-eminent among the serious diseases for whose management the general practitioner has a special responsibility, this book deserves to be widely read by all those in general practice.

Lecture notes on general surgery. Second edition. H. ELLIS, D.M., M.Ch., F.R.C.S., and R. Y. CALNE, M.S., F.R.C.S. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1968. Pp. 395. Price £2 2s. 0d.

The fact that a second edition of this most useful book has been called for within three years of its first appearance is an indication of the extent to which its usefulness has been recognized.

The new edition has been carefully revised, and several new diagrams have been added, notably in the chapter on the Chest and Lungs. A short additional section on the general principles of transplantation surgery has been added. In spite of these changes only 13 pages have been added, and the price—surely almost an economic miracle—remains the same.

For those who did not see the earlier edition, the book is based on notes of lectures given by the authors to final-year students, and provides an excellent revision course for a student just before the examinations. It will confirm him in what he already knows, and remind him of what he has forgotten.

I have a medical student son, and I am keeping this book for him. What more can I say than that.