

statistics". This is a book to dip into from time to time, rather than take out of a library for weekend reading. The author says the key word to statistics is "probability". From this book the probability is that all who read even a few chapters will learn to look at old problems with a fresh mind.

Peptic Ulcer. T. L. CLEAVE, M.R.C.P. (LOND.), Surgeon Captain, Royal Navy. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1962. Pp. vi + 151. Price 25s.

The author of this book has done much research into the causation, prevention, and arrest of peptic ulcer, and supports the theory that dietetic changes in the more highly civilized countries have, in no small measure, contributed to the high incidence of this disease in these countries.

Evidence is produced that peptic ulcer is a comparatively new disease and one that has rapidly increased in incidence in the last thirty years or so.

He discounts the stress factor and considers that "It is not the production of acid that is at fault, but its imperfect buffering by the altered foods of our present civilization, aided by disregard of the instinct of appetite".

This is a small readable book that should be read by general practitioners, and it is concerned with a subject that might well lend itself to further research by the College.

The Theory and Practice of Anticoagulant Therapy. L. POLLARD, M.D. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1962. Pp. viii + 143. Price 27s. 6d.

As the author says in his preface, in few general hospitals today is full advantage taken of therapeutic agents in the prophylaxis and treatment of thrombo-embolism. How much more does this apply to general practice. In this excellent little book the most interesting and important chapters for family doctors are those on the clinical incidence of thrombotic diseases, the oral anticoagulant drugs, and those on short-term and long-term anticoagulant treatment.

The opening clinical chapter is sketchy, and neither here nor elsewhere is enough stress laid perhaps on the importance of infection in the pelvis in determining the onset of postoperative venous thrombosis in association with gynaecological or other lower abdominal surgery. Thrombophlebitis as an early, and perhaps for a time the only, clinical manifestation of malignant disease is rightly mentioned; but the not uncommon association of venous thrombosis with high serum-uric-acid levels and gouty phenomena is omitted.

The value of anticoagulant treatment in intermittent insufficiency of the vertebrobasilar system is discussed. These symptoms often disappear spontaneously as a collateral circulation opens up, and in the particular work to which the author refers no control observations are given. Although the incidence of haemorrhagic complications of long-term anticoagulant treatment may, as the author says, be "quite small", the very serious nature of some of these haemorrhages when they do occur is not pointed out. Sometimes they are worse than the original illness, and

because of them many well known clinicians do not use long-term anti-coagulant treatment at all.

This book contains much valuable clinical advice and technical details. Some of the latter is not really applicable to general practice; but we know that a few family doctors (and even a very occasional patient who lives abroad, far from any laboratory) can carry out their own prothrombin estimations accurately. It is useful to have all this information, with many references, in a work of this size.

Handbook of Treatment of Acute Poisoning. Third edition. E. H. BENSLEY, *M.B.E.*, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.P.(C), F.A.C.P. and G. E. JORON, B.A., M.D., C.M., F.A.C.P. Edin. and Lond. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. Pp. vi + 227. Price 15s.

This small book contains a wealth of information in compact form, compiled in such a way as to give a guide to treatment of acute poisoning. The emphasis is on emergency measures which can be employed.

The book is divided into two sections: (1) basic principles—general plan and methods of treatment, and (2) important types of acute poisoning and their treatment.

The second section covers a wide and varied list of poisons considered by the authors to be more commonly the cause of acute poisoning, and a few more rare poisons included because their mode of action or treatment present special features. The treatment of each type of poisoning is divided into that advised before the arrival of the doctor and that after his arrival, thus allowing treatment to be started with as little delay as possible.

This book is small enough to be easily carried in bag or car and is designed to help the doctor with no special knowledge of toxicology who may be called to treat a case of acute poisoning.

Disease in Infancy and Childhood. Fourth edition. RICHARD W. B. ELLIS, *O.B.E.*, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. Edin. and Lond. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. Pp. v + 717. Price 60s.

This book is a fine example of what a standard textbook should be. Every general practitioner should have it on his shelves for in it he will find full descriptions, written in a clear and concise style, of all the unusual conditions which he may encounter in the course of his practising life. If, however, he uses it to refresh his mind of the more common illnesses of children he may be disappointed. For instance measles is disposed of in two and a half pages and its treatment in ten lines, and here he will find that the routine use of sulphonomides will be of some value in relieving complications and that chemotherapy in the treatment of bronchopneumonia has lowered the mortality from secondary infection. Surely an understatement, and why no mention of antibiotics? Forty-five pages are devoted to tuberculosis, only 39 to other diseases of the respiratory tract, and it is odd that this chapter should be headed "Non-