

with general practitioners. Now in its ninth edition it retains its freshness though changes have again been made. The section on skin has been re-written by Dr A. Lyell who has succeeded in producing a very clear account of a difficult subject. Other newly written chapters are on Antibiotics and Chemotherapy, Common Disorders in Infancy, Nutritional Disorders and Renal Diseases. In spite of all this the number of pages has been reduced slightly.

Modifications and new techniques and treatments have been added where necessary. It would seem from scanning its pages that this book is still intended primarily for the general practitioner, and it ably achieves its purpose.

The Principles and Practice of Medicine. SIR STANLEY DAVIDSON, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., LL.D., F.R.S. and past and present members of the staff of the Department of Medicine, University of Edinburgh, and associated clinical units. Seventh edition. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Pp. xii + 1,262. Price 37s. 6d.

Tropical Diseases. Supplement to *The Principles and Practice of Medicine.* SIR ALEXANDER BIGGAM and FREDERICK J. WRIGHT. Seventh edition. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Pp. 1,263 to 1,417. Price 10s. 6d.

After two years another edition (the seventh) of Davidson has arrived. This so-easy-to-handle and so-easy-to-refer-to book needs no introduction. The editor tells us that sales are over 200,000, a really remarkable achievement. This edition, unlike the last, has been added to considerably and Sir Stanley Davidson has rewritten and enlarged the chapter on Nutritional Disorders.

Another innovation is the provision of a separate supplement on Tropical Diseases by the late Sir Alexander Biggam and Dr Frederick J. Wright. Here in 150 pages those diseases usually met with only in the tropics are well, if briefly, described. Those conditions such as malaria, amoebiasis, enteric fever and smallpox which are not infrequently encountered in this country and in temperate climates, are still included in the main volume.

The main volume has increased by 156 pages to 1,262 pages of text, and selling at 37s. 6d. is undoubtedly the best value in medical textbooks.

Current Diagnosis and Treatment. HENRY BRAINERD, M.D., SHELDON MARGEN, M.D. and MILTON J. CHATTON, M.D., and associated authors. Los Altos, California, Lange Medical Publications, and Oxford, Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1964. Lithographed in U.S.A. Pp. i + 870. Price \$9.50 (72s.).

Although it is not mentioned on the verso of the title page, this book was first published in 1962 and new editions have appeared under the titles *Current Diagnosis and Treatment 1963* and now *Current Diagnosis and Treatment 1964*. The book is thus revised annually and will continue to be prepared for distribution in January of each year. To cut down costs the text is lithographed and the book is bound in stiff paper covers.

Diseases are discussed by organ classification, and further chapters

are included on General Symptoms, Fluid and Electrolyte Disorders, Collagen Diseases, Infectious Diseases, Diseases due to Physical Agents and Poisons. Appendices cover Unestablished Drugs, Recently Introduced Drugs, Glossary of Genetic Terms, Chemical Analysis of Blood and Body Fluids, Liver and Renal Function Tests. References to the literature follow each section, with general biographies at the end of each chapter.

In their preface the editors state that the book is intended to serve the practising physician as a useful reference book and not as a text-book of medicine. With this disclaimer they do themselves less than justice, for though compressed the text is eminently readable and conducive to browsing.

Skilful editing has resulted in a uniform presentation of a vast amount of material. Wherever practicable diseases are considered under the following headings: Essentials of Diagnosis, General Considerations, Clinical Laboratory and X-ray Findings, Differential Diagnosis, Complications and Treatment.

The following principles, which have been adhered to in the drug sections of the book, are worth noting. Proprietary combinations of drugs have, in general, been omitted. Repeat-dosage and prolonged-dosage preparations have not been listed on the grounds that such preparations are unpredictable in their behaviour and that most of them appear to release their total dose at once. Standard, well established and familiar drugs have in general been preferred. Drugs whose usefulness has not been established by conventional and approved pharmacological and clinical techniques have not been recommended.

In a work of this kind a more comprehensive index would be welcome. It is frustrating not to find sciatica indexed as such or under 'disc'. It has to be looked up under 'intervertebral disc' or 'herniation, intervertebral disc'. Again, the only 'pain, abdominal' referred to in the index is that of pregnancy, although there are sections on acute peritonitis and other causes of the acute abdomen in the chapter on the Gastro-intestinal Tract and Liver.

Cheaply produced paper-back text books of this kind designed for frequent replacement before they become out-dated are a great boon and it is not surprising that this series of books has found a wide acceptance in the United States. It deserves a similar success in this country.

Synopsis of Respiratory Diseases. J. SMART, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. Pp. 154. Price 22s. 6d.

This is one of the synopsis series published by John Wright. They are written in note form for students and postgraduates and their success must be determined by the lack of ambiguity and the clarity of the facts presented in this abbreviated way.

The synopsis of respiratory diseases succeeds in most of the subjects dealt with, though less well in the complicated subject of respiratory physiology than other chapters. The diagrams representing radiographs are clear, and the absence of the originals not missed. The paucity of symptoms and signs in bronchopneumonia in the elderly is not mentioned nor, surprisingly, pneumoconiosis due to coal dust. Methicillin and