

The success of this book is shown by the need for a second edition in 1964. The limp cover has been replaced by a stiff back and the binding is therefore firmer, but otherwise there appears to be no change.

The book is well written, well balanced and adequately illustrated; it bears that indefinable stamp of the experienced clinician and teacher. In describing and illustrating the uses of electrocardiography, the author is at great pains to stress and reiterate its limitations; it is just as important to understand what cannot be done with electrocardiography as what can, and a separate chapter—Discussion—is mainly devoted to this. It is the author's opinion that, as a rule, electrocardiography should not be undertaken by general practitioners, and the object of this book is to show general practitioners the type of information which can be obtained by electrocardiography, the indications for such investigation, and its limitations. These objects are admirably fulfilled.

Physician's Handbook. Thirteenth edition. Edited by MARCUS A. KRUPP, M.D., NORMAN J. SWEET, M.D., ERNEST JAWETZ, PH.D., M.D., and EDWARD G. BIGLIERI, M.D. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1964. Pp. iv + 558. Price 34s.

This is the thirteenth edition of the Physician's Handbook, the editors having maintained their usual practice and produced a revised edition within two years of the previous one. The entire text has been revised and a new chapter on medical genetics added.

The first article in the handbook deals with the clinical examination of patients. The authors say that "... this must be carefully performed, correctly interpreted and correlated". They continue that the laboratory examination, the main topic of the book, is an extension of the clinical examination, and surely this is correct. In practice today the doctor is becoming involved in screening procedures for such conditions as cervical carcinoma and diabetes mellitus. How tempting it is to screen rather than examine. The importance of adequate note making is also stressed, this could also become a lost art.

The handbook is written largely in note form, with clear headings, and a well set out type making it easy for the reader to pick out relevant sections. Many of the chapters go into great detail, in some cases it would seem too great, reflecting the vast amount of information available and possibly a fault of this type of collective book. There are many diagrams and drawings, but no reproductions of x-ray photographs. This is a mixed blessing, some typical x-rays are usually selected for textbooks, and in practice the abnormal is often seen. The drawings in the chapter on medical parasitology deserve special mention. They are excellent.

It was difficult to find any omissions: the immunological pregnancy test, now in quite common use, is not mentioned, nor is the iron-sorbitol-citric acid complex mentioned in the treatment of hypochromic anaemia. Begimide is not considered in the treatment of barbiturate poisoning. Since the book is an American production there is the usual problem over the differences in drug trade names; however, approved and chemical names are given throughout.

This handbook is an absolute mine of information, an excellent book for the medical registrar reading for membership, and a useful reference book for the general practitioner.