THE BRITISH NATIONAL FORMULARY

The National Formulary. By the Joint Formulary Committee. Pp. 210. 5s. London: The British Medical Association and The Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. 1955.

Contents: 1. Preface. 2. Notes for Prescribers. 3. Prescriptions for Dangerous Drugs. 4. Prescriptions for Schedule IV Poisons. 5. General Notices. 6. Pharmacological Classification. 7. Formulary. Appendices. Index.

This issue of the National Formulary represents the third edition of a most useful reference pocket book. The Joint Formulary Committee comprised of some 39 representatives of the medical and pharmaceutical profession has made the book suitable for various professional needs. The previous attempt in the 1952 edition (reviewed in this *Journal*, 21 November 1953, (**27,** 1067) to be modern and use English headings in preference to Latin did not apparently meet with favour, so that one finds now a reversal to Latin nomenclature, but only as far as main titles are concerned; in the formulae themselves English names for the drugs are used. Other changes have been introduced to facilitate reference and cross-reference. The pages of the section dealing with prescriptions for infants are coloured light blue, a useful innovation. New material has been added. A certain amount of pruning has been done but not as much as some would desire; the reason being that preparations that have traditional value and which are still frequently prescribed have still to be retained. The valuable lengthy lists of proprietary preparations for which there are equivalent Formulary or official preparations have been extended and indexed, and the list of approved names has been revised.

Readers will be aware of the Hospitals Formulary compiled for use in the Cape Provincial hospitals (first edition, 1954), which was reviewed in this *Journal*, 26 February 1955, **29,** 218. This local formulary will come to be widely used in this country, and in future editions no doubt the necessary changes and improvements will be made to bring it to its fullest value. The volume under review differs for example in being indexed more fully and in containing a section on Notes for Prescribers, in which the treatment of poisoning and concise notes on analgesics, anthelmintics, antihistaminics and so forth are provided. It is up-to-date, moderately priced, and needs no recommendation.

ANTISERA, TOXOIDS, VACCINES AND TUBERCULINS

Antisera, Toxoids, Vaccines and Tuberculins in Prophylaxis and Treatment. By H. J. Parish, M.D., F.R.C.P.E., D.P.H. Third Edition. (Pp. 227 + x with illustrations. 21s.) Edinburgh. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1954.

Contents: Part I. General. 1. The Uses of Serological Preparations. 2. Immunity. 3. Methods of Administration of Antigens and Antibodies. 4. Serum Reactions and Serum Sensitivity Tests. *Part II.* 5. Antisera. 6. Antitoxic Sera. 7. Antivenoms. 8. Antibacterial Sera. 9. Antiviral Sera. *Part III.* Products for active Immunization and Some Diagnostic Reagents. 10. The Schick Test and Active Immunization against Diphtheria. 11. Combined Active Immunization. 12. The Dick Test and Active Immunization against Scarlet Fever. 13. Active Immunization against Staphylococcus Infections. 14. Active Immunization against Tetanus and Gas Gangrene. 15. Bacterial Vaccines—I. 16. Bacterial Vaccines—II. 17. Tuberculins. 18. B.C.G. and Vole-Bacillus Vaccines. 19. Active Immunization against Virus and Rickettsial Diseases—I. 20. Active Immunization against Virus and Rickettsial Diseases—II. 21. Historical. Suggestions for Further Reading. Index.

This book now appearing in its 3rd edition has an altered title, the words 'Bacterial and Virus Diseases' no longer prefixing the remainder of the title.

In his preface the author states that considerable progress has been made in immunology during the last 3 years and it is now a well-established science. How true that statement is!

The writer deals in detail with the subject of combined active immunization against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis. He describes a recommended method of immunization during early life against these diseases. The problem of whether to inoculate against diphtheria and pertussis during a prevailing poliomyelitis epidemic is also raised. Mention is made too of combined immunization against tetanus and enteric fever.

Attention is paid to the role of B.C.G. and vole-bacillus vaccines in the campaign against tuberculosis. With regard to the vole-bacillus vaccine considerable research is in progress with a view to testing its efficacy. (A recent article by Wells and Wylie* puts forward a plea for the use of the vole-bacillus vaccine.)

In the section on viruses poliomyelitis, now very topical in South Africa, is discussed and the author states that practical vaccines may be available within the next few years though the cost of production will be high.

The work concludes with an historical section and at the end of the book the author lists a series of references which he recommends for further reading.

This 3rd edition should prove of the greatest assistance to the practitioner and public health official. The concise manner each subject is dealt with, and the clearly tabulated index, make it an ideal book for reference.

C.S.H.

* Wells and Wylie. British Medical Bulletin Vol. 10 No. 2. 1954. Page 96.

HUMAN BIOCHEMISTRY

Human Biochemistry. By Israel Kleiner, Ph.D. Fourth edition. (Pp. 746 with 93 text illustrations and 5 colour plates. £3 3s. 9d.) St. Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company. 1954.

Contents: 1. Introduction. 2. Physical Chemistry. 3. Carbohydrates. 4. Lipids. 5. Proteins. 6. Tissues. 7. Milk. 8. Blood. 9. Enzymes. 10. Digestion. 11. Chemical Changes within the Large Intestine. 12. Vitamins. 13. Foods. 14. Physiological Oxidations. 15. Nitrogen Metabolism. 16. Carbohydrate Metabolism. 17. Lipid Metabolism. 18. Mineral Metabolism and Water Balance. 19. Urine. 20. The Chemistry of Respiration and Acid-Base Balance. 21. Energy Metabolism. 22. Changes in the Chemical Composition of Blood. 23. Hormones. 24. Chemical Structure in Relation to Biological Phenomena. 25. Recent Clinical Applications. Appendix.

It is stated in the preface to the first edition that this book is intended for medical students. The method of presentation is old-fashioned, but is to be recommended in so far as it starts by

dealing with the basic principles and reactions underlying the processes discussed. This occupies the first quarter, but thereafter the method leads to reduplication, some subjects being dealt with four times over, in varying minuteness of detail.

The last third of the book attempts to cover practically the whole field of pathological chemistry, and suffers the fate of such a degree of compression—indigestibility, misleading over-simplification and even some quite incorrect statements. A contributing factor is possibly that no less than 36 people are thanked in the preface for 'searching criticism of various chapters or large sections'.

On page 475, we are told that removal of the parathyroids increases urinary calcium, but on page 619 we are correctly told that the opposite occurs. Few people would agree that 'Proliferation of islet tissue, i.e. tumour of the pancreas, frequently occurs' (page 441), nor would they agree that the urea in the glomerular filtrate is not affected by the renal tubules (page 517). It is surprising to find in a text-book published in 1954 that the Tocantins theory of a thromboplastin destroyer as the cause of haemophilia is given equal prominence with that of anti-haemophilic globulin—'the assumption is that this unidentified factor is associated with the globulins' (page 188). Christmas factor is not mentioned though discussion is otherwise very full.

On the other hand, a clear exposition is provided of the interrelations between fat, protein and carbohydrate, and of their inter-convertibility at the tricarboxylic acid cycle level in intermediate metabolism. The section on the nomenclature and relationships of the sterols is also very clear.

This book can be thoroughly recommended as a reference book for clinicians and pathologists wishing to learn more about the basic biochemistry of any field in which they are interested, but biochemists interested in the physiological and pathological applications of their fields of study would be well advised to consult one of the standard text-books dealing with those fields only.

As one has come to expect from the C.V. Mosby Company, the reproduction is of a high standard throughout.

C.R.M.