variation, chi-square and t-test with varying degrees of clarity. The introduction at an early stage of the equation to the normal curve contributes little to understanding and will dishearten the amateur doggedly working his way through the formulae.

Page 176 bears witness to careless proof reading, for it carries three minor errors and a major one in the formulation of the basic expression of the value of Student's t.

The worked examples in the text are admirably chosen, many from recent medical publications. Why, though, are there no answers or working check for the problems set at the end of each chapter?

H.K.

NEW AND NONOFFICIAL DRUGS, 1958


The aim of this annual publication is to be as up to date as is possible, and there is no doubt that the aim has been achieved. There are about 48 new additions to the list of drugs, including mecaminamine hydrochloride, novobiocin, cyclodexrine, promazine hydrochloride and tolbutamide. In fact, there are few drugs of recent origin which are not mentioned, proguanil, bemegride and amiphenazole being amongst the more useful of those omitted.

As would be expected in a work written by experts in their own field and carefully edited into an integrated whole, the accounts of the drugs are concise, factual and accurate. The amount of space devoted to any one drug varies from a few words to about four pages. A drug is listed wherever possible under its U.S.P. name (a slight disadvantage to British readers) or else its generally accepted name, e.g. primidone, and formula, actions and uses (including toxicity) and dosage are given. The general arrangement is in chapters, each of which is devoted to some class of drugs, e.g. autonomic drugs, central nervous system depressants. Information is given on vaccines, isotopes and the use of drugs in diagnosis.

One might quarrel with certain aspects in the balance of the work. Is information on biotin, chlorine and the hypochlorites really necessary, one wonders, in a book of such modernity? The index does not include clinical conditions, which fact somewhat detracts from its use as a reference book, though the list of contents at the beginning is very informative. The sections on antibiotics, hormones and hormone substitutes are excellent. There is, strangely enough, almost no data on tranquilizing agents.

The general practitioner, and also the medical consultant, may well find a place for this handy book (it is only 7½ by 5 in.) in their library as a quick reference book. The lack of bibliography rather precludes use of the book by those engaged in teaching therapeutics; the omission of old and tried compounds, such as magnesium trisilicate and various older purgatives, and also the transatlantic fashion in anti-histamine drugs (which so differs from our own fashion) makes one hesitate in recommending the book to students unless in conjunction with a standard work on therapeutics.

W.H.H.A.

BRITISH MEDICAL BULLETIN

Volume 14, Number 2


This number of the British Medical Bulletin comprises of an introduction by Professor A. Haddow and 21 review articles representing the main contributions to work on carcinogenesis made by British investigators during the last decade. More than half the articles are chiefly concerned with chemical carcinogenesis, and this is a fitting tribute to and reflection of the classic contributions made by the late Sir Ernest Kennaway. The frontispiece is an excellent portrait of this great man. Five articles are devoted to radiation carcinogenesis, one to immunological theories and one avian carcinogenesis. The very important recent contributions made in the fields of virus carcinogenesis and tissue culture are almost entirely neglected. The articles are clearly presented, excellently illustrated, and cover their specific fields well. The lists of reference are particularly useful.

E.A.W.

LUMBAR DISC LESIONS

By J. R. ARMSTRONG, M.D., M.Ch., F.R.C.S.


The second edition of Mr. Armstrong's monograph makes a welcome appearance. A number of chapters have been enlarged by the inclusion of recent work on various aspects of the subject.

The chapters on the functions of intervertebral discs include summaries of recent papers on the range of movements in the lumbar spine.

The section on aetiology includes recent theories, involving factors other than trauma, including disordered fluid balance and mental stress.

The use of myelography is discussed in the chapter on investigations. The author reflects current practice in reserving this investigation for the elucidation of obscure spinal conditions, such as tumours. He feels it plays no part in the routine investigation of the level of a disc protrusion.

The chapters on conservative management of lumbar disc lesions are concerned with the treat-