The object of Dr. Dawkins' little book is to assess the influence of the new development on post-operative mortality and morbidity. For this purpose an analysis has been made of no less than 16,000 general and local anæsthesias used with and without various types of basal narcosis.

The collection and tabulation of such a vast mass of statistics have obviously entailed an immense amount of work and Dr. Dawkins' conclusions should be read and taken to heart by all engaged in surgery and anæsthesia. It is impossible even to summarize his results here, but several important facts emerge. One is that, as so many previous observers have found, local analgesia, *per se*, does *not* diminish pulmonary complications. The chief point that the author makes, however, is that the incidence of these complications is greatly increased by the use of routine and injudicious basal narcosis.

An unbiased survey of this subject has been long overdue and one cannot escape the conclusion that if basal narcosis is to be employed, it must be in the sole charge of a really experienced anæsthetist who has considered the patient and operation from every relevant angle.

A list of 90 references is found at the end of the book.

FOOD AND THE PRINCIPLES OF DIETETICS.

(Eighth Edition)

By DR. ROBT. HUTCHISON and PROF. V. H. MOTTRAM. Messrs. Edward Arnold & Co. 1936. Price 21/-.

Although this is the eighth edition of this well-known book we feel sure that there never was a time when it would be not only more welcome but also more useful. Since the last edition the world has become diet or food conscious, and hence there is an urgent need that reliable and sound information on the part which food plays in health and disease should be available. The scientific, and unfortunately also unscientific, work which has been done during the last fifty years on the general subject of nutrition, on the analysis of different foods, on the changes which these undergo during the process of cooking or other treatment,

and on their effects on the physiological and pathological processes is enormous. In this volume Dr. Hutchison and his collaborator Prof. Mottram have brought together the fruit of this labour, and what is equally if not more important, they have submitted the available information to a scientific and clinical scrutiny so that a most sound, dependable and, it may also be mentioned, readable work is the result. There are many illustrations and tables of analyses and copious references to original sources throughout the text, and a very full index which renders the work in addition a valuable book of ready reference.

A SYSTEM OF CLINICAL MEDICINE.

(TENTH EDITION.)

Edited by AGNES SAVILL, M.D. and E. C. WARNER, M.D. Messrs. Edward Arnold & Co. 1936. Price 28/-.

Any book which has passed through ten editions has demonstrated conclusively that it supplies a demand and that this has been the case with Savill's System of Clinical Medicine is not cause for surprise. Indeed, it is astonishing that it has no competitors for the plan of the book is an admirable method of arousing the student's interest in his subject and thus of imparting knowledge. Most text-books confine themselves either to methods of physical diagnosis or to a more or less academic discussion of the different diseases grouped according to ætiology or organ or part of body attacked. In Savill's Medicine, however, the introduction is by symptom and from this the student is conducted through the necessary examination to a consideration of the possible diseased conditions, the ætiology, life history and treatment being finally discussed. It is in this way, we are convinced, that the facts are most firmly impressed on the memory of the reader.

Each succeeding edition has been more comprehensive than its predecessor and in this, the tenth, in which Dr. Agnes Savill (the widow of the original author) has the assistance as co-editor of Dr. E. C. Warner and the help of a group of well-known

medical authorities, the subject matter has never been better displayed. The appearance and arrangement are excellent, the illustrations are uniformly first class and there is a very detailed index so that as well as being a book suitable for systematic study it will be eminently useful as one of ready reference and, in our opinion, should form a part of every medical student's own library.

ESSENTIALS OF MODERN MEDICAL TREATMENT.

By VINCENT NORMAN, M.D., Etc. Messrs. Hutchinson. 1936. Price 10/6.

This book is essentially one of treatment and as is indicated, one that can be used for ready reference. It is, as it is meant to be, one for the use of the "General Practitioner." Of late years there have been rapid advances in the treatment of disease, and it is very difficult for the busy practitioner to keep up to date with modern methods. It is an opportune time for the appearance of such a book, which contains just this information and which at the same time is small and eminently readable. The author has omitted all unnecessary material, and has given in a comprehensive form modern advances in treatment in so far as they can be effective and practical.

The book is well arranged and easy of reference. Further editions, brought up-to-date, should continue to be invaluable to the general practitioner who has not the opportunity of keeping in touch with modern practice as demonstrated in Post-Graduate and other courses.

HANDBOOK OF DISEASES OF CHILDREN.

(SECOND EDITION.)

By BRUCE WILLIAMSON, M.D. Messrs. E. & S. Livingstone. 1936. Price 10/6.

Dr. Williamson is to be congratulated on packing so much information in a readable and interesting fashion within the space of 300 pages, and that the presentation is appreciated is demonstrated

by this, the 2nd edition, being called for within the comparatively short period of five years. We cannot recommend this volume to the student as his only textbook on pædiatrics because it suffers, like all such condensed treatises, from too much dogmatism (the author's own views being too baldly stated) and hence a lack of perspective. Nevertheless, as a means of quick revision it will be found useful.

THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

(A Preliminary Communication.)

By W. M. STEVENS, M.D., F.R.C.P. London. 1936. H. K. Lewis & Co. Price 2/- net.

In the foreword to this small monograph the author explains that it is merely a condensed extract of a much larger work which he hopes to publish in book form before long.

With his main thesis that "the real aim of Medicine should be the prevention of disease, so that death ensues only from accidents or from natural senescence" there is hardly anyone who will disagree. Dr. Stevens lays stress on the importance of the endocrine glandular system as a natural protector of the body, and maintains that iodine has a highly specialised function as an activator of the various glandular activities essential to normal metabolism and to protection against disease.

Little, indeed, is known of the endocrine mechanism of the body, but Dr. Stevens' ideas, so far as we can gather them from this very brief preliminary communication, are certainly interesting, and in our opinion may well represent some vision of the ultimate truth. We must confess that we can hardly go all the way with him in his enthusiasm for iodine in regard to the prevention of almost all the diseases that man is heir to, but we hope to see in the main work, of which this monograph is but the herald, some more solid and convincing evidence of the attractive hypothesis to which he has introduced us.