Your Prostate Gland
Letters from a surgeon to his father
by Reed M Nesbit MD
2nd printing pp ix + 50 illustrated 28s
Springfield, Ill.: Charles C Thomas
Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications 1961
Dr Reed M Nesbit is a distinguished American urologist, and his little book entitled 'Your Prostate Gland' is written in simple language with a minimum of technical terms, by means of letters to his father, a layman.
They describe quite briefly the anatomy and physiology of the prostate, and the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of the gland when enlarged. There is also a chapter on prostatic cancer.
These letters are intended to be read by the public, and as such can play an important part in its medical education. How much members of the general public should know about their organs in health and disease is a matter of controversy. So long as an elderly man enjoys good health he need not wonder how his prostate is getting on.

Drugs in Anaesthetic Practice
by F G Wood-Smith MA MB(Cantab) FFA RCS and
H C Stewart MA MD(cantab) PhD(Lond) MRCP
pp vii + 464 63s
London: Butterworths 1962
This book was designed to fill a very real need. The student reading pharmacology for the Primary FFA RCS has no single source to which he can refer.
The range of subject matter is wide and well-planned, unfortunately the book falls short of what is required in a number of respects. There are some omissions, a number of inaccuracies, and examples of obscure phraseology which would leave the untutored reader confused.
It would have been helpful if reference had been made to the more important papers, on tubocurarine chloride the only one is to an article by Mushin describing its intramuscular use with hyaluronidase. There is a good account by P J Horsey of Electrolytes and Infusion Fluids.
It is impossible to recommend this book to the examination candidate seeking information additional to that contained in textbooks of anaesthesia.
The Brain as a Computer
by F H George
pp 413 illustrated 63s
One of the most chastening experiences for a biologist is to pick up a book with a profound and alluring title, to read a few paragraphs of straightforward introduction and suddenly to find himself floundering in a cross-sea of definitions and equations. Perhaps this is the just reward for the dabbler and dilettante who wants to dive before he can paddle in the rock-pools of class-room algebra. Dr George has arranged for a rather more gentle decline than in other recent works but his main theme still demands a high degree of mental buoyancy and concentration if the reader is to follow him into '... a conceptual world in terms of machine analogues, from which we may ultimately derive more precise theories of behaviour and theories of the internal organisation of the human being especially at the level of the nervous system'.
Inevitably, the first half of the book is devoted to a description of computers and synthetic organisms; here more direct references to the properties of living creatures, if only in illustration, would have helped the human biologist to appreciate the basic principles. It is confusing, in the light of contemporary discoveries, to assert that 'It is another foundation point of cybernetics that the neuron is (or can be regarded as) a form of 2-way switch'. Enunciation of the all-or-none law in physiology anticipated binary computers by several generations and the infringements of the law by the brain are among its most intriguing properties. Biologists will find these sections difficult and their relevance sometimes obscure. The second half deals more directly with the psychological and physiological problems defined as learning, perception and cognition. Here again the biologist, and still more the clinician, is likely to find his head reel as he tries to follow the intricate word-spinning that seems so large a part of psychological discourse. Somehow both the obscured of the algebras and the ambiguities of the vernacular must be avoided if we are to understand one another and ourselves. Dr George realizes this and frequently urges the development of models to define and perhaps to solve the outstanding problems, but his scholarship and sense of scientific equity have too often led him to embed his own crisp and original notions in the classical cotton-wool of his predecessors.

Disturbances of Heart Rate,
Rhythm and Conduction
by Eliot Corday MD FACP FACC and
David W Irving MD
pp xi + 357 illustrated £2 19s 6d
This book constitutes a modern account of the more common cardiac arrhythmias and incorporates much of Professor Corday's own original work on the subject. Emphasis throughout is on the basic mechanisms concerned, and much effort has been expended on the production of numerous diagrams to this purpose. Although most of the illustrations are excellent some are disappointing and a few are unnecessary. For example, over half a page is devoted to a diagram
of a heart with a sinuous interrupted line around the atria, supposedly representing the path of a 'circus' wave in atrial fibrillation, as originally thought by Lewis, and a similar figure illustrates the alleged path in atrial flutter. These particular figures are especially rendered unnecessary as there is a good and modern account of the 'L' and 'm' waves of atrial fibrillation – which is not surprising, as Corday worked with Prinzmetal and others on this subject.

Some chapters are outstanding, and among these the one on hemodynamic disturbances resulting from cardiac arrhythmias incorporates much original work. The chapter on bedside diagnosis is of great practical value. Refreshing emphasis is placed on the importance of emotional factors in precipitating cardiac arrhythmias. There is a good chapter on treatment.

**Entomology for Students of Medicine**

by R M Gordon OBE MD SCD FRCP and M M J Lavoipierre BSc MB ChB

pp 353 illustrated 52s 6d

*Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications 1962*

'Entomology for Students of Medicine' begins by surveying briefly the total relationship between man and insect in both beneficial and injurious aspect, but thereafter the book is limited to the consideration of arthropods as direct and indirect vectors of disease. The authors assume in their readers a real interest in entomology but no specialized knowledge, and they therefore proceed to give a detailed account of the evolution and life history of a typical insect, enlarging this theme to show how the general structure and anatomy have become adapted to environmental conditions of all kinds, leading to an astonishing complexity and variety within the vast phylum of the arthropoda.

The greater part of the book is devoted to a study of the various orders, families, subfamilies and species and the whole is written with beautiful clarity and conciseness of language. It has been profusely illustrated by Miss Margaret A Johnson with drawings executed with great precision and economy of line. The publishers have made a beautifully balanced production and provided a textbook of entomology for students who have little previous knowledge of the subject.

**Occupational Health Nursing**

(Baillière's Handbooks for Nurses)

by F H Tyrer MA MRCS LRCP DIH

pp x+173 illustrated 25s

*London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox 1961*

There is a dearth of good books on occupational health nursing, and the publication of this handbook is most welcome. It provides, above all, an excellent account of the background to nursing in industry and its reading should prove a most useful orientation to the new or recent recruit to occupational health nursing. It also includes information on the law in relation to occupational health, the functions of a nurse in an industrial medical department, and record keeping. A short account of the commonest industrial diseases – dermatitis, pneumoconiosis and eye injuries – is given and there is a chapter summarizing the preventive approach to other diseases.

This book makes no claim to be a textbook and, apart from one or two tables, is free from unnecessary detail which would make reading difficult. It contains much good sense and is to be recommended to all beginners in occupational health nursing.

**Modern Treatment Yearbook 1962**

edited by Sir Cecil Wakeley Bt KBE CB LLD MCH DSc FRCS FRSE FRSA FACS FRACS

28th ed pp ix+306 illustrated 35s

published for The Medical Press

*London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox 1962*

This twenty-eighth edition of the 'Modern Treatment Yearbook' is well up to the high standards of its predecessors. To those who are unfamiliar with its plan, it consists of 29 chapters on a range of diverse subjects such as diabetes, treatment of jaw fractures, schizophrenia, rectal prolapse, the aged patient, rheumatoid arthritis, ovarian cysts, congenital dislocation of the hip, plantar warts and asthma.

Each section is written by a different author by invitation yet all the sections are of high calibre. There is much to learn from each chapter and anyone seeking to keep up to date would do well to study it.

**The Historical Development of British Psychiatry**

Vol. I 18th and 19th Century

by Denis Leigh MD MRCP

pp xiv +277 illustrated 70s

*Oxford, &c.: Pergamon Press 1961*

The theme of this book is illustrated as far as possible by biographies and an account of the ideas and achievements of many men, now mostly forgotten. In the eighteenth century the way was prepared for the 'moral treatment' revolution in psychiatric care; the first third of the book deals with this century, ending with Pinel's dramatic unchaining gesture in the Bicêtre and the founding of the York Retreat in 1792. To this chapter is appended an extensive list of psychiatric books published in English during the century.

The rest of the book consists of three essays, on John Haslam, James Cowles Prichard and John Conolly; the first does much to restore the reputation of an original and discerning writer, a