

tetracyclines. It is essentially clinical in its focus and is valuable as much for the description of the type of cases which have been treated with these drugs without effect as it is for the reference to those cases which have been treated successfully. It is a most valuable book to have available for reference purposes.

While the use of these antibiotics has revolutionised the treatment of many infectious diseases it must never be forgotten that they are potentially dangerous substances themselves, notably Chloramphenicol. This substance has from time to time been responsible for most disastrous blood states, especially aplastic anaemia, and we are convinced that it should only be prescribed after the most serious consideration.

Chloramphenicol is the drug of choice in the treatment of salmonella infection and probably in the treatment of rickettsial disease. It is useful in some other illnesses, but probably not as a drug of choice. We are hesitant about the statement in the text that it may be justifiable to use this drug for the control of milder forms of pertussis, provided that the proper precautions are taken; these precautions should be specified under such headings as the disease being recognised early: that the drug should not be continued long and that a careful watch of blood changes should be maintained. It is apparently true that the blood changes produced by Chloramphenicol do not occur acutely but rather slowly, and thus some warning of the development of a major catastrophe should be possible.

In the case of the tetracyclines, likewise toxic reactions are possible. There is hardly sufficient reference to the use of Nystatin in the treatment of moniliasis and the use of such a substance as tetracycline phosphate complex is not referred to. The value of the B vitamins is deprecated reasonably enough on experimental and theoretical grounds.

This is a very useful reference book which can be thoroughly recommended.

OLIVER FITZGERALD.

#### NEW EDITIONS

*A Manual of Pharmacology.* By T. SOLLMANN. 8th Ed. Saunders. £7.

Sollmann remains as magnificent a textbook as ever. It contains a vast amount of information. This has, needless to say, meant careful study of the literature since the last edition (1948). This has been a period of great expansion of the knowledge of pharmacology combined with the introduction of many new drugs.

It is a storehouse of information about drugs and it can be relied upon to a very high degree. There is nothing perfect on this earth, and this is also true even of the best of books which do slip up and occasionally seem to lay an incorrect emphasis. One of the difficulties which face the compiler of a modern manual is in regard to the very name of drugs. The official titles of drugs in the B.P. and U.S.P. not infrequently are different for the same drug: e.g., "Pethidine" is "Meperidine" in the U.S.P.. It ought be possible that there should be some international agreement or body which could decide formally upon names of drugs, or, alternatively, informally allow the country of origin of the drug the right to name the drug temporarily. This suggestion can apply only to the official names of drugs. Surely, however, all proprietary titles should carry associated with them the official name. In these ways we might hope to limit that piling of terminology upon new drug production which daunts us all.

There are a few points in the book with which the reviewer would not entirely agree. Chlorpromazine jaundice is described as due to "intra-hepatic cholestasis from canalicular infiltration." There is no reference to bile thrombi as a factor much referred to in the literature. Reserpine is discussed with little reference to its possible association with the metabolism of 5-hydroxytryptamine, and there is no reference to its production of a degree of depression which may even be suicidal and is a real danger with use. Its value in the treatment of vascular hypertension is unduly minimised. Urea is described with no reference to the general belief now that it is actually metabolised by endogenous and by bacterial urease. Its relationship to liver disorders is not mentioned. The only uses mentioned for this substance are in the local treatment of infected wounds, and for reduction of cerebro-spinal fluid pressure when given intravenously. Its use as a diuretic, for example, is overlooked.

The reviewer has been always somewhat dissatisfied with Sollmann's discussion in relation to the differences between alcoholic drinks. It is stated that there is no metabolic difference between different alcoholic drinks and that they all produce the same effect in direct relation to the level of blood alcohol produced. This would not be accepted by anybody in these countries. References supporting these statements are more venerable by their antiquity than by their current value. This matter surely would bear with some modern investigation, especially relating to the varied ways in which alcoholic drinks are metabolised, in their breakdown to acetaldehyde and, possibly, other toxic products.

This book is an absolute necessity for anybody teaching pharmacology or therapeutics, and a most valuable textbook for reference purpose for any teacher in medicine. A copy should be available in all medical libraries for reference purposes. We most heartily recommend it, despite its somewhat formidable price in our currency.

O. FITZGERALD.