ESSENTIALS OF CHEMICAL PATHOLOGY. By D. N. Baron, M.D. (Pp. xi + 247; 25s.)
London: The English Universities Press, 1957.

Among the ever-appearing publications which deal with medical and allied subjects it is a relatively uncommon event for a volume devoted entirely to chemical pathology to appear and to those interested in this subject something of an event. The present volume differs in some essential respects from most of those already on the market in that, to quote from the author's preface, "This book has been designed to meet the needs of medical students and of house officers and registrars for an adequate knowledge of chemical pathology and to enable them to follow developments in this rapidly advancing subject." Within these self-imposed limits the author has succeeded and his book should meet with considerable success.

The format of the book is conventional, the initial chapters being devoted to the general biochemistry of the body constituents, water and electrolytes, carbohydrates, proteins and lipids. The succeeding chapters deal with disturbances of biochemical function on a systemic basis and the investigations of these abnormalities. The book is essentially concerned with interpretation and consequently data concerning the actual performance of laboratory procedures is limited to the minimum required for the understanding of the results. There are three appendices; No. 1 deals with normal values, No. 2 with methods of routine ward testing, and No. 3 selected examination questions on chemical pathology. Intentionally the author has limited his references to standard textbooks on the subject, and one cannot help feeling that rather more wide indication of useful additional reading would have been an advantage.

Among the chapters of which special mention may be made are those dealing with the proteins, which includes a useful up-to-date account of differential protein analysis, and with the endocrine glands.

The price of this book must compare very favourably with present-day prices for medical publications, and on the whole it can be warmly recommended not only to that group to whom it is directed, but would be found very useful by junior members of biochemical and laboratory establishments.

R. A. N.

CHRONIC SCHIZOPHRENIA. By Thomas Freeman, M.D., D.P.M., John L. Cameron, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.M., and Andrew McGhie, M.A. (Pp. x + 158. 21s.) London: Tavistock Publications, 1958.

In this monograph the authors begin by laying before their readers a theoretical framework which they then proceed to apply to the behaviour and utterances of a group of schizophrenic patients between 20 and 40 years of age who had been in the chronic refractory wards of the Glasgow Royal Mental Hospital and who had been diagnosed as schizophrenic more than two years previously. They do not make it clear how long the patients had to be in these wards before they qualified for selection, nor do they state whether all patients found there who fulfilled their other requirements were used for the study. It would have been useful to know whether any were left out and the reasons for their omission.

It is not until chapter 10 of this eleven-chapter monograph that, as Miss Anna Freud says in her introduction, "Finally, readers are introduced to the painstaking methods by which the patients are induced—wherever possible—to re-establish contact with the environment." Prior to this there is a detailed presentation and consideration of the psycho-analytic theory of mental functioning and the psychopathology of schizophrenia. Having provided their own theoretical spectacles, they then utilise isolated clinical examples to illustrate the phenomena they observed under such headings as "confusion of identity," "disturbances in perception, of thinking and of memory." They justified their use of such examples by avoiding complex psychopathological inferences that would have called for long accounts of group interviews to support them. The examples are interesting in themselves, but when they are used only in support of a theory, and never to draw attention to gaps in that theory, some readers will perhaps think that "faith" would be a more appropriate descriptive term. The authors, however, express surprise at how coherent occasional remarks of a seriously disturbed schizophrenic can be. In their conclusions the authors make it clear that they have deliberately
ignored any etiological implications in discussing their views on schizophrenia, but they make it equally clear that the basic disturbance in this group of disorders is, in their opinion, something that damages the ability to differentiate the self from the environment. They point to analogous findings by Piaget, who described the inability young children have in distinguishing self from not-self, to what can happen during mescal intoxication and to Goldstein's analysis of concrete and abstract thinking, and to Penfield's experiments in which electrical stimulation of certain parts of the temporal lobes produced a specific reliving of a life experience. They do not attempt to locate the ego anatomically, but hope that these analogies may lead to a better understanding of the schizophrenic. When the treatment of chronic schizophrenia is discussed the theoretical framework becomes one of several possible explanations that might be put forward for what was observed. To show such a lively interest in a small group of patients who had been confined with others in the refractory wards, to provide them with occupational therapy which was not diversional but brought its rewards, and to surround them with nurses who treated them with a dignity and understanding that do not originate in psycho-analytic techniques alone, whilst supporting both the nurses and the relatives during the process of social rehabilitation, would be one explanation that would have made this clinical account more widely intelligible.

In the reviewer's opinion this monograph is primarily of interest to the psycho-analyst. It will be of value to other psychiatrists who are interested in how the theories of psycho-analysis may be used to provide a frame of reference for the phenomena of schizophrenia.

J. G. G

MODERN TREATMENT YEARBOOK, 1958: A Yearbook of Diagnosis and Treatment for the General Practitioner. Edited by Sir Cecil Wakeley, Bt., K.B.E., C.B. (Pp. viii + 312. 27s. 6d.) London: Bailliére, Tindall & Cox, for the Medical Press, 1958.

The thirty-one articles in this volume are presented in the same readable form as in previous years and maintain the high standard of their predecessors.

Methods of examination and treatment, which in comparatively recent years would have been regarded as firmly established procedures, are today being questioned and in many cases altered radically. One might cite two articles illustrating this in the present volume, the article on the breast and that on the use and abuse of ear-drops. Among other informative articles may be mentioned those on congenital heart disease, on aches and pains of psychogenic origin, on hiatus hernia, and a very comprehensive study of dyspnea.

A careful perusal of this volume cannot fail to stimulate the practitioner's critical faculties and to help him in the application of modern methods of investigation and treatment to many of the problems of his everyday work.

W. G. F.

MEDICINE AND THE NAVY, 1200-1900, Volume 1, 1200-1649. By J. J. Keevil. (Pp. xii + 253; plates 15. 40s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1957.

Friends and colleagues of the late Surgeon-Commander Keevil have known for some years of his deep interest and attachment to the history of the naval medical service and to all matters pertaining to nautical medicine. This book, which is the fruit of his patient and scholarly research, is undoubtedly the most comprehensive of its kind that has ever been published. It is to be regretted that his untimely death will prevent completion of the second part—the story of medicine in the Navy after the early Stuart period up to the present day. References for the most part are from original sources, and although plentifully quoted in the text the admirable style adopted by the author has woven together the history in a most delightfully told narrative, which not only brings the reader into intimate contact with the hardships which the early seaman encountered, but depicts in a lively fashion the intrigues, jealousies, and defaults of those who were primarily responsible for administration throughout the ages. Thus, although such men as John Goodall and Captain John Smith advocated an adequate treatment for scurvy, it is curious to reflect that their good advice lacked the force even of fleet orders, and although preventive measures were practised by individuals, no concerted plans or directions were given in the fitting-out and preparation of ships for long voyages.

R. S. A.