aspects of ophthalmology—anatomical, physiological, optical, and clinical—in a reasonably compact textbook.

There can be few criticisms. The use of the term 'macula' (which embraces the fovea and parafovea) in the context of squint should be avoided because it is too imprecise, and the distinction between fovea and parafovea when account is taken of the nature of the retinal fixation of the squinting eye is of considerable importance in the assessment of the squint. It is rather gloomy to regard the presence of anomalous retinal correspondence as determining the achievement of only a cosmetic result because anomalous correspondence provides a most useful binocular function with an adequate range of anomalous fusional vergence provided the angle of the residual squint is small and provided also that the vision of each eye is reasonably good. It is worthwhile mentioning the risk of the development of an anterior segment ischaemia when there is an interference with all four (or even three) rectus muscles, as in certain forms of transplant operation. The discussion on congenital nystagmus is confined to the pendular type, but it would be improved by a mention of the jerky type which is very different in its mode of origin and prognosis. It is somewhat surprising to see the tumbling method of intracapsular cataract extraction discussed and illustrated in such detail; it is, of course, a sophisticated procedure but it is doubtful if it should continue to be advocated in view of the widespread use of alpha-chymotrypsin which more or less eliminates the need to rupture the zonule mechanically, and also in view of the widespread reliance on the use of the cryoprobe in the delivery of the lens which would be contraindicated in a tumbling procedure.

KENNETH WYBAR

Low Blood Sugar. By Peter J. Steincrohn. (Pp. xii + 146; illustrated. £2.40.) London: Allison and Busby. 1974.

This book is written, very obviously, for the layman. Its author, according to the dust cover, is 'one of America's best known internists' presumably because he has written no less than 22 other books; hopefully more authoritatively than this one.

Low blood sugar is the latest addition to the rapidly growing literature intended for the general public explaining how all of their vague symptoms from 'fatigue, sudden weakness, headache, tremors,

nightmares, heart palpitations, insomnia, nervousness, nausea, faintness, anxiety, dizziness, irritability, forgetfulness, confusion, depression' through to a host of other symptoms are all due to hypoglycaemia. The type of hypoglycaemia referred to incidentally is not that due to islet cell tumour or any other well recognized cause but that which can be diagnosed only by performing a six-hour glucose test.

The importance of this book to clinical pathologists is that it may help to explain to them why they are beginning to receive so many requests for this tedious procedure which is almost impossible to interpret. If the author of 'Low blood sugar', for example, had read critically even a modicum of the scientific literature, some of it extending back as long as 52 years, he would not have made the mistake of showing, on page 9, a typical 'normal' venous blood sugar curve after oral glucose as one in which postabsorptive blood glucose levels do not fall below the fasting level. My recommendation is do not buy this book but know of its existence.

VINCENT MARKS

Sputum: Fundamentals and Clinical Pathology. Edited by Marucio J. Dulfano. (Pp. xvi + 632; illustrated. \$27.75.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1973.

As the editor of this book points out in his preface, it is more than 50 years since the last attempt was made 'to update comprehensively the numerous advances' made on the subject of sputum. For this reason alone—and it is not the only one—the reader must be grateful to Dr Dulfano for having persuaded 21 contributors to prepare the 15 chapters that make up this book, which gives a broad treatment of the subject of sputum and its constituents.

There are chapters on mucus, its chemical composition, its physical properties, the histochemical features of the mucus-secreting cells and their ultrastructure, the anatomy of the mucociliary apparatus, the mechanisms for lung clearance, on bacteriology, mycology, the cytology of cancer and of non-malignant conditions, special examinations of sputum, and, as well, pharmacological agents and respiratory tract fluid.

It is to be expected that there is some overlap and some gaps and that some chapters are more exhaustive than others. All save one of the chapters are by authors

from the United States. Usually the bibliography is wide. The final chapter on 'Pharmacological agents and respiratory tract fluid' is written by Emeritus Professor S. M. Boyd and is not as broad as its title might suggest in that it is a summary, by one of the pioneers in the field, of over 60 years, based on and confined to the collection of respiratory tract fluid in animals.

It may be invidious to pick out some chapters but a personal choice, based partly on quality, partly on the fact that the material may be less widely or less easily accessible, would include the earlier seven chapters dealing with the newer developments as well as the later one, on sputum proteins, by Masson and Hellemans.

LYNNE RIDD

Modern Trends in Oncology. Part I Research Progress. Part II Clinical Progress. Edited by Ronald W. Raven. The Modern Trends Series. (Pp. Pt I: x + 295; Pt II: xi + 332; illustrated. £7.00 per volume.) London: Butterworth Group. 1973.

The conception of a special field of medicine to study and treat cancer has excited much interest and controversy. Undoubtedly, such a speciality embraces many different aspects of cancer and the practice of 'oncology', as it has come to be called, must therefore involve the co-operation of surgeons, radiotherapists, physicians, and research workers alike.

It is encouraging to see that such co-operation has extended to the publication of this book which, in two volumes covers a wide range of topics. In 28 chapters by 37 contributors, it discusses such subjects as the incidence, epidemiology, immunology, and therapy of individual cancers. It is well illustrated, and each chapter is followed by a liberal collection of references. Inevitably, any single work covering an immense field has omissions. This book is no exception and it is disappointing to find that chemotherapy, whose impact one might anticipate has yet to be fully realized, is not given greater attention. Indeed, only scant attention is given to the acute leukaemias, where in childhood particularly, extensions to life have been significant.

These criticisms apart, the two volumes afford useful reading to the student entering 'oncology' and will provide a stimulus for further reading.

J. M. A. WHITEHOUSE