BOOK REVIEWS


This small book is far from being a manual of chemotherapy. It is a beautifully concise statement of the fundamentals on which cancer chemotherapy is based and will be judged useful by any doctor — or medical student — unfamiliar with the subject who wishes to acquaint himself with the rudiments.

The author refrains from taking sides in controversy and states each proposition in its simplest form. The book does not, however, lack practical application, containing short sections on such topics as "who shall treat the patient?" and "To treat or not to treat?" The text contains only one illustration but is well referenced as a source of further reading. A light-weight book for the non-oncologist.

D M ROBERTS


Mnemonics are used by some teachers and students in order to help memorise information. In general terms one either uses mnemonics or one does not, it is usually a black and white situation.

Mr Shipman has boldly collected together a large number of mnemonics covering many aspects of medicine and surgery and divided into 27 sections covering 300 pages. I am sure that we would all appreciate the usefulness of many mnemonics that have a direct association with the disease or a medical personality whose name is associated with the disease. Mnemonics utilise the initial letter of the word or phrase in order to set down a heading for a word or phrase that is associated with the disease process. For example, those for Tuberculosis, Ca Rectums, Ulcerative Colitis, Crohn's and Carcinoid are excellent and easily associated and remembered. Those for the clinical features of Parkinson's and of hepatic damage using the name of Sheila Sherlock are very clever. Others which are easily remembered are those which have a direct association, for example the differential diagnosis of pain in the right side of the abdomen is described by the mnemonic of acute appendicitis — most appropriate. However, these good examples form only a small proportion of those quoted and it is difficult to believe that the clinical features of puritis ani can be easily remembered by the mnemonic "Pigs" or that "Buggars" is an easy way to remember the clinical features of hereditary spherocytosis.

In a number of cases alternative mnemonics are used and one cannot help feeling that, for example, in the causes of diarrhoea the mnemonic "unformed stools" is far better than the alternative "Pass Big Dutch Cap"!

My personal feeling is that for a mnemonic to be useful it must be associated directly with the name of the disease process, the anatomical part or an eponym. The traditional method remembering facts by relating to anatomy, physiology, pathology and clinical features are more reliable under stress.

Perhaps some of our readers might care to comment on the usefulness or otherwise of mnemonics in surgery and medicine.

M S OWEN-SMITH


Over the last decade there has been an expansion of the modalities use in diagnostic medical imaging.

Now one Military Hospital has a Nuclear Medicine facility and all Radiologists whether Military or Civil have to cover aspects of Nuclear Medicine Imaging in the studies for the final FRCR. This book covers the production and uses of the pharmaceuticals used in Radio Isotope work with two chapters on colour imaging and a record of the experience of Nuclear Medicine at Brookhaven National Laboratory. Much of the contents of this book will be in advance of requirements for Radiologists preparing for the FRCR but there is a great deal of useful information to be extracted from a number of the chapters, particularly those that are orientated on clinical problems. Some of the illustrations are of Rectilinear Scans which are now somewhat outdated, but there is a good number of illustrative Gamma-Camera Images. The general layout of the book is satisfactory and the references comprehensive. While this book is not likely to be bought by the individual, nor indeed is this recommended, it is a very useful handbook to have available in the library of a department of Nuclear Imaging.

C R BRADSHAW