BOOK REVIEWS


This excellent undergraduate text book has been born out of the concept of integrated undergraduate teaching courses which are now popular at many British Universities and Medical Schools.

Revision material in the basic sciences of Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacology and Biochemistry is presented at the beginning of each chapter and integrated into the clinical discussion thereafter. It should be emphasised that it makes no pretensions to be anything other than an undergraduate text. The postgraduate student will require more detail especially on the themes of investigation, management and treatment.

However with the introduction of much basic science material into the postgraduate Diploma examinations this book would certainly benefit many candidates for the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians.

Overall it must be commended for its approach as it emphasises the necessity for the reader to understand the causes of neurological symptoms and signs in terms of their anatomical site or pharmacological basis rather than to try and identify the name of the disease at the outset. This undoubtedly helps in understanding the nature of neurological disease and dispels the commonly held belief that it is a difficult aspect of illness that is only understood by neurologists.

C J GARRETT AND A W SCOTT


This excellent little book of 220 pages comes in a paperback edition and should be in the armamentarium of the newly qualified house surgeon. The text covers basic urological practice, is easy to read, and helps the junior doctor to understand modern treatment and investigation.

The reproduction of line drawings, graphs and X-rays is good.

As a reference book, I would recommend it not only to junior medical staff but also to post-RGN nurses embarking on a career in the operating theatre or in specialised urology units.

N GRAY

Current Operative Surgery.


The first two volumes in this new series, covering Vascular and General Surgery are now published.

The declared aim of the series is to "keep surgeons in touch with the major advances in surgery, describing them in sufficient detail to allow the techniques to be added to the surgeon's armamentarium". The books are designed to be read by experienced practising surgeons and, as Mr. Crawford Jamieson states in his preface to the Vascular volume, "not merely surgeons in training. Perhaps 'only' would have been more appropriate! Choice of topics for inclusion in such volumes must be an unenviable task - and to some extent reflect the particular interests of the editors - but none-the-less within each speciality a broad range of subjects has been covered.

The majority of topics are discussed in a uniform pattern of patient selection, full and clear operative details, post operative care and complications.

Since the procedures described are relatively new discussion on results can only reflect short term experience. The more recent medical, and indeed lay press, sadly underline this point in respect of extracranial - intracranial bypass results; although the author of this chapter accepted that long term assessment was awaited.

'Vascular Surgery' contains twelve chapters, seven of which are contributed by North American surgeons.

Three chapters are concerned with femoro-distal bypass with different materials, and a fourth discusses percutaneous transluminal angioplasty of the lower limb. Intra-arterial prostaglandin for severe ischaemia and the management of prosthetic graft infection are further allied topics.


This is a recently published text book for nurses. The author states that it is primarily written for study purposes for student nurses and I would agree with this.

The book is in two sections.

Section One covers the psychological, spiritual and social needs of the patient including diagnostic investigations, preparation of the patient for surgery, aspects of wound repair and supportive nursing care in general.

Section Two discusses specific conditions in a succinct manner which successfully highlights the most important factors for consideration.

I particularly like the suggested reading list and specimen care plans given at the end of each separate condition covered. The author uses Roper's "Activities of Daily Living" as a model.

Qualified nurses may well feel that this book is too shallow for their needs but the book should find a ready audience in students and pupils requiring a concise summary for revision purposes.

E E GRUBER
Other subjects included are aneurysms involving visceral arteries, the problems of sexual dysfunction in aorto-iliac surgery, extracranial – intracranial bypass, vertebral artery reconstruction, and the treatment of thoracic outlet syndromes.

Apart from 'Segmentectomy 4', from France and 'Conservative surgery of the spleen', from Los Angeles, the remaining seven chapters of 'General Surgery' are contributed by surgeons from the British Isles.

Conservative and reconstructive surgery are prominent, the pylorus, gastric reservoir and breast all being discussed. The latter chapter includes some excellent "flow charts".

Oesophageal varices is the only topic covered by two chapters – both gun transection and injection being discussed. Peritoneovenous shunts for intractable ascites, and the surgery of morbid obesity complete the nine chapters.

Considering the range of topics, and numbers of contributors, the editors have achieved a remarkable uniformity of presentation and ease of reading.

Both volumes are well illustrated, the line drawings by Mr. M J Courtney being particularly good. However, the number of the latter could have been reduced. If these volumes were designed for the 'experienced practising surgeon' then one questions the need for a half page diagram to illustrate the making of a burr-hole, and labelling skin, retractor, burr-hole and brace and bit. In other examples information from two diagrams could easily be condensed on to one without loss of clarity.

Each chapter concludes with a useful list of recent references, and both volumes have a clear index. Production is in a format that makes for both ease of reading and rapid reference, and both volumes are reasonably priced.

Both volumes achieve the declared aim of the series, the operative technique being well described, and it is hoped that forthcoming volumes will achieve the same standard.

Because of the broad range of work undertaken by military surgeons, individual purchases tend to be of more general work, and only a very strong interest in several of the topics would lead to such individual purchase. However, every hospital library should have a copy of both volumes, and trainees should not be put off by Mr. Jamieson's comments – many of the topics covered are eminently suitable for discussion at Final Fellowship.

M J PAYNE


This book certainly gives a new approach to A/E nursing, introducing the nursing process and giving examples of standardised care plans for major illnesses and injuries. It discusses in depth why accidents happen, and indeed the first chapter is an excellent introduction into A/E nursing in general, dealing as it does with the sociology of trauma and illness, and psychology in A/E. It stimulates the reader into thinking about why patients behave in the ways they do in the strange and unfamiliar environment of the hospital, and gives simple advice on how to approach and communicate with the individual, looking at him or her as a "whole person" and not just "another patient".

The common illnesses and injuries seen in A/E are covered in the book and reference is made to those patients with special needs ie. those with behavioural problems, children, the elderly, and ethnic minorities.

I found the diagrams to be rather uninteresting and dull and some of them were over-simplified. The care plans were in very small print with much detail, and because of this they were not very clear and at times actually difficult to follow.

I do, however, recommend that the book be read by both trained staff and learners. It would be especially useful to read prior to an A/E allocation, and would give excellent insight and background to A/E nursing.

G M DAVIS


This is an updated reprint of the original book published in 1973. There is very little new material and it is unfortunate that the text refers throughout to ACGIH threshold limit values without mention of the more recent HSE Occupational Exposure limits. Having said that it retains the merits of the original publication in setting out details of a hundred common occupational health hazards in the form of hazard and medical data sheets.

The layout is consistent and the presentation clear and attractive.

It is a useful book for quick ready reference especially by the examination student.

C J LEWTHWAITE


This large-format paperback report covers the activities of tropical disease research programmes sponsored by WHO for the 2 years ending in December 1984. It reviews all of the premier league of tropical infections, and also contains sections on vector control and research management and finance.

It is attractively laid out, with good diagrams, and each chapter ends with a summary of future hopes and plans, and abundant references. It is a very valuable summary of the "leading edge" in tropical medicine, and is recommended also as a good source of teaching material.

G O COWAN