

Book Reviews

Current Operative Surgery: Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Edited by Ian F. K. Muir. Pp. ix + 173 with 144 illustrations and tables. (London, Philadelphia, Toronto: Ballière Tindall, 1986. Distributed by Holt-Saunders Ltd., Eastbourne, Sussex). Price £29.50.

This book is one of those collections in which the Editor has asked a number of recognised authorities to write a chapter on a topic of current interest to plastic surgeons. On this occasion the emphasis is on operative surgery. These are eight chapters and they cover a wide range; interestingly, Robinson's on pharyngeal reconstruction by microvascular jejunal transfer is the only one devoted to a microvascular technique, although Soutar's useful review of methods of lining defects of the mouth includes an excellent description of the use of the radial forearm flap. These two chapters illustrate the widely differing approaches used by different contributors. On the one hand there are those who, like Soutar, review current practice; Wade and Ward on the common problems of primary flexor tendon repair and breast reconstruction, and David on the uncommon Treacher Collins syndrome do so clearly and well. On the other hand the description of personal techniques, used by Robinson, is shared by Borchgrevink who describes the Oslo approach to cleft palate surgery, a welcome chapter in view of the superb results obtained in that Unit. Regrettably, while the primary surgery is described in meticulous detail there is only a very brief description of their technique of bone grafting. Van der Meulen starts his chapter on hypospadias with a review of the embryology of the condition, useful if perhaps straying from the main theme, but restricts himself to his own surgical innovations. However, he describes, perhaps for the first time, an interesting variation of the preputial island flap. Adamson sets out his own technique of facelift by the SMAS technique and suction lipectomy.

The book is illustrated by clear line drawings and black and white photography of variable quality, and there are useful references at the end of each chapter.

A book of this type has to stand comparison with other compendia of the "current trends" or "recent advances" genre. There is inevitably some overlap between them, although less than one might expect, and the style and standard of the contributions here are uneven. However, the best of them are excellent. While there is little that is new, there is much that is of interest and it is helpful to have such information so easily accessible. The price may seem high for 173 pages but it too is in keeping with current trends and is considerably less than that of any medical book from across the Atlantic. This is a good buy for the busy surgeon.

A. C. H. WATSON

Problems in Aesthetic Surgery. Biological causes and clinical solutions. Edited by Ross Rudolph. Pp xix + 434 with 198 illustrations, 3 colour plates. (St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co, 1986). Price £59.50.

Together with the editor, 27 authors have contributed to the 19 chapters of a volume which has a rather misleading title. Over half of the chapters cover aspects of basic science applicable to the whole range of plastic and reconstructive surgery, and thus

the readership of this book should be much wider than the title suggests. The topics covered are wound healing in cosmetic surgery, healing of the open wound, the biomechanical properties of tissue, healing in compromised tissues, skin grafts and hair transplants, prostaglandins and thromboxanes, keloids and hypertrophic scars, perioperative hypertension, infectious disease problems, aging of skin, disorders of pigmentation, regulation of human adipose tissue metabolism, a biologic approach to collagen replacement, peripheral nerve regeneration in the face, elastic fibres in cutaneous elastoses, dermabrasion and chemical peel, lasers and treatment of port wine stain haemangiomas, cosmetics and skin preparation, and capsular contracture in the augmented breast. The last four chapters were of particular value as was the section on healing in compromised tissues which included reviews of the effects of irradiation and smoking on wound healing. In such a volume discussing problems in aesthetic surgery, I was surprised and disappointed to find only 2% of space (8/434 pages) devoted to infectious disease problems, but a disproportionate 31 pages to elastic fibres in cutaneous elastoses. The 34 pages devoted to dermabrasion and chemical peel, however, were worthwhile and a useful review of the problems and limitations of these procedures. An important omission from the discussion of intralesional triamcinolone for treatment of hypertrophic scars was any indication of dose or dose limitation. This is clearly important—particularly in children, and the incidence of allergic response to this therapy should have received mention.

As with many multi-author texts some contributions are more readable than others, and several could with benefit have been made far more concise—either by the contributor, or failing that the editor (is that not what editors are for?). Sadly, but predictably, in such an American publication only one of the listed contributors works outside North America.

Random checking revealed mis-spelling of 'recurrent' (p. 2), an incorrect page reference for Fig 2-4, and inaccurate references for Fig 4-7 and Fig 7-3; the first numbered superscript reference on p. 264 should be ¹ and not ².

This book has drawn together useful information from otherwise scattered sources and at £59.50 is good value and should be available in all plastic surgery departmental libraries.

R. W. GRIFFITHS

Atlas of Wrist and Hand Fractures. 2nd Edition. By S. C. Sandzen, Jr. Pp xiii + 498 with 1290 illustrations. (Massachusetts: PSG Publishing Co. Inc., 1986. Distributed by Wright, Techno House, Redcliffe Way, Bristol). Price £65.

This is an excellent reference book for anyone interested in hand surgery, be they plastic or orthopaedic surgeons. It is full of plentiful radiographic and clinical figures illustrating a well written text. Whether it is necessary for every plastic surgical library to have a copy for reference may be in doubt, especially in units where hand surgery is not a strong feature. On the other hand, it might be argued that the information contained would be useful in strengthening this weakness. There is a tendency to look at the pictures rather than read the text, though having looked at the excellent pictures one really has to go to the text to get the complete information. Soft tissue problems and management do not form the major purpose or content of this book, but are discussed. This includes a complete chapter on crush injuries and another on retained foreign bodies.