

## Book Reviews

**Let's Face It.** By Christine Piff. First edition. Pp. 128. (London and Sydney: Sphere Books Ltd., 1986). Price £2.50 paperback.

"Let's Face It" is a description of a patient's experiences undergoing radiotherapy and surgery for cancer of the maxilla. Mrs Piff may or may not be a talented person. She herself, by a reference to a friend's superior abilities, seems to suggest that she is not particularly gifted. The literary style of the book is ordinary. However, surgeons will recognise through her text the problems experienced by patients enduring facial mutilation. Firstly, the comprehension barrier which suddenly gives way when the realities of treatment are understood. Secondly, the doctors' embarrassment barrier when they realise that the patients have not really understood their condition until some crystallising moment. Then the realities of treatment and the subjective effects (awful) of head and neck irradiation. The symbolic significance of hair and its loss in women comes across clearly. Next, the reversion to idealised childhood memories and the use of fantasy to soften unpleasant manoeuvres. Doctors, too, will recognise the depressive psychological withdrawal on homecoming. Should psychotropic drugs be given? Do doctors really understand the subjective response of patients to treatment?

When young adults first contemplate the reality of their own death, the commonest reaction is concern for the void that will be left in their families or social groups. Mrs Piff describes such feelings. This negative attitude has matured in her into a positive determination to help fellow sufferers. Facial surgeons must hope her self-help group will flourish—our results will be better. Mrs Piff might be "ordinary" but that which she has conceived and started makes her extraordinary, maybe unique.

C. R. RAYNER

**Atlas of Tumours of the Facial Skeleton.** B. J. Prein, W. Remagen, B. Spiessl and E. Uehlinger. Pp. x + 162 with 264 figs (some colour). (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, Tokyo: Springer-Verlag, 1986). Price DM368.

Professor Lucas's book *The Pathology of Tumours of the Oral Tissues* (Churchill Livingstone, 1965) has for 20 years been the standard text for head and neck surgeons dealing with rare tumours of the facial skeleton. We now have an admirable text devoted specifically to facial skeletal tumours.

Professor Prein and his colleagues, members of the German-Austrian-Swiss Association for the Study of Tumours of the Jaws and Face (Dösak), founded in 1971, have collected all the information about tumours of the facial skeleton in the German speaking world.

The resulting atlas has been well prepared; there is a clarity of presentation, a profusion of illustrations both radiographic and histological, a comprehensive list of references and an irreproachable index. This is an excellent book, to be highly recommended.

As a result, Professor Lucas's book has become dated although still a worthy reference volume. This new volume is an essential

addition to the library of head and neck surgeons from whatever discipline. It will be continually referred to by the 'physician' presented with a rare facial bony tumour.

N. M. BREACH

**Atlas of Head and Neck Surgery.** By Carl E. Silver. First edition. Pp. xii + 325 with 96 figs. (New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne: Churchill Livingstone, 1986). Price £80.

In the preface to this book the Editor says it is orientated towards the practice of a head and neck oncologist with basic training in general surgery or otolaryngology. This is certainly reflected by the content and authorship and by many of the techniques shown.

Each chapter describes, after a brief introduction, a selection of operative procedures in a specific region of the head and neck, with numerous step-by-step artists' drawings and written text referring to them. In some chapters there are a number of black and white photographs and coloured drawings. In many instances discussion of indications for the procedures shown is only brief, and results and postoperative problems are really not covered at all. The book does not claim to present comprehensively all the procedures which may be required in each area. Of the nine chapters, two are of little interest or relevance to the plastic surgeon who works in the head and neck cancer field, being on thyroid surgery and on the surgical treatment of hyperparathyroidism.

One chapter of 26 pages is on reconstruction. Part of it is by Dr Ariyan with his, now familiar, diagrams of musculocutaneous flaps in the head and neck. Most of the material is presented but briefly, in particular that about free tissue transfer, and any trainee intending to reconstruct an operative defect would do well to read beyond this chapter. For that purpose a bibliography is given at the end of each chapter.

In other chapters reconstructive methods are shown, some of which would be considered obsolete by most plastic surgeons now, and others which are generally not used by plastic surgeons but are of interest, such as split skin grafts in the mouth covering bone after marginal mandibular resection.

In an atlas one expects a good standard of diagrams and drawings. The quality of these varies a lot in this book, being drawn by a number of artists. The work of one of these is superb but that of others ranges right down to rudimentary and disappointing line sketches.

Plastic surgeons will find little use for this book. While exposures and techniques of resection are adequately covered for the most part, at least for the sample of procedures selected, one would hope that those in other specialties intending to perform their own reconstructions would look rather further along the library shelf in preparing for that.

M. D. POOLE

**The Hand: Fundamentals of Therapy.** First edition. By Judith Boscheinen-Morrin, Victoria Davey and W. Bruce Connolly. Pp. xii + 225 with 159 illustrations. (London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington: Butterworth & Co., 1985). Price £15 paperback.

One of the problems facing authors in Hand Surgery is to find a succinct and distinctive title which has not been used before.

"The Fundamentals of Hand Therapy" may have been a better title for this book which has been written as a reference manual for those doctors and therapists whose practices include a limited number of hand patients.

Each of the thirteen chapters, which collectively cover most aspects of hand surgery, is set out in a similar way. The relevant anatomy, physiology and pathology of each condition is briefly discussed before the therapy is described in greater detail. Objectives are stated and sequential treatment schedules week by week are set out in detail. The final chapter concentrates on materials and splint manufacture with appropriate back references.

The text has been set out with sub-headings and contains many lists which make for quick and easy reference. There are numerous good quality, clear black and white photographs and excellent line diagrams. The inclusion of key references at the end of each chapter is laudable in a book of this size.

One or two features may puzzle the uninitiated. In the chapter on flexor tendon injuries, the appearance of elastic bands from finger to wrist may seem baffling as no mention of dynamic traction is made in the text.

The occasional illustration fails to deliver its message. On page 87 the reader is likely to be more impressed with the patient's tee shirt than with the splint, and on page 154 pinch grip function is demonstrated by a patient with a two-digit hand holding playing cards which advertise tobacco.

The importance of a team approach in the care of patients is well emphasised and it is particularly fitting that this doyen of antipodean hand surgery has co-operated with two of his therapist colleagues to record collectively their wide experience in this demanding type of surgery.

This book will not only be a worthy addition to any medical library but also deserves a place on the shelf of any clinical department involved in the management of hand conditions.

R. E. PAGE

**1986 Year Book of Cancer.** Edited by R. C. Hicky, R. L. Clark and R. W. Cumley. Pp. 494 with 109 figures. (Chicago, London: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc., 1986. Distributed by Wolfe Medical Publications Ltd., London). Price £43.

The Year Book series are a great boon to those of us (probably all of us) who are unable to keep up with the burgeoning number of journals that overspill the racks of our medical libraries. They present a sequence in *précis* of papers on selected topics published in the previous year, with helpful footnotes made by a member of the editorial board with special knowledge of a particular subject. In this volume, devoted to oncology, are to be found 33 chapters headed according to the anatomical site of a cancer, epidemiology, method of diagnosis, biology and style of treatment. At the end of each chapter is a list of references recommended for additional reading.

This reviewer is not qualified to judge which countries and departments lead the field in various aspects of oncology but it does seem that the text, like so many American publications, has a certain parochialism in its selection of worthy papers. Perhaps it is a reflection of the fact that only 8 of the 140 members of the editorial board work outside the United States

of America and that of those Americans 77 are from the State of Texas. But however the papers were chosen, the whole book provides a great source of invaluable postgraduate revision and education for the plastic surgeon who, in the course of pursuing the goal of surgical reconstruction, can so easily forget the biology of the original tumour and dismiss out of hand other primary and adjuvant methods of treating cancer.

The one disappointment is the brief and incomplete chapter on terminal care but, as the hospice movement is relatively new in the USA, one assumes that this subject will be covered in greater detail in future volumes.

Although few plastic surgeons are likely to buy this book for their personal library, it can be strongly recommended for access and referral in their local university or postgraduate medical library.

C. M. WARD

**Advances in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Vol 3.** Edited by Habal, Morraine, Lewis, Parsons and Woods. Pp. xvii+315 with 192 figures and tables. (Chicago, London: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc., 1987. Distributed by Wolfe Medical Publications Ltd., London.) Price £58.

This book sets out to provide the busy clinician with a method of keeping abreast of *advances* in plastic surgery. The Editors have invited selected authors to write to treatise on subjects in which they have a specific interest, to a level "not possible in more abbreviated journal review articles."

Nine chapters are presented by, in all, eighteen authors and five editors. The subjects include fasciocutaneous flaps, nipple areolar reconstruction, surgery to the cleft lip nose, bone grafting, haemangiomas, the scientific basis of skin staples, male pattern baldness and suction lipectomy. A short first chapter reflecting on advances in plastic surgery is of historical interest but does not contribute to the aims as set out in the statement of purpose.

The book is well presented with good style and a useful index. Some of the illustrations are of poor quality and before and after pictures are not always comparing like with like. Personally, I sometimes found the American style of expression rather heavy going. Typographical errors are few, though I had to smile at reference 14, on page 36, where the authors of "The anatomy of potential fasciocutaneous flaps in the forearm" included not only Lamberty B.G.H. and Gilbert D.A. but also Thames N.E.!

From the standpoint of the British trainee, this book is useful as a rapid method of gaining insight into these particular subjects, each of which is well provided with a long bibliography. However, there are some unfortunate omissions, for example, in an update on bone grafting I had looked forward to a comparison between vascularised and non-vascularised bone grafts. It was also irritating to read, on page 131, that the morbidity from anterior tibial bone grafts is minimal and on page 158, in the next essay, that "pain and restriction of mobility makes such a donor site unpopular", but these are two authors' differing views as was mentioned in the editorial comments. In all I felt that this book is worthy of a place on unit library shelves but it does not, however, match the clarity and usefulness of the similarly named *Recent Advances in Plastic Surgery 3* by Jackson and Sommerlad.

A. R. GREEN