

Book Reviews

Atlas of the Qatari Method for Treatment of Burns. By Abdulla A. Al-Baker. Pp. 89 with 414 colour illustrations. (Doha, Qatar: Ali Bin Ali Printing Press, 1986. Distributed by Orient Public Relations, PO Box 4244, Doha, Qatar). Price £30.

This book records the experiences of one surgeon in the care of the burned patient over a period of 8 years. He describes the Qatari Method—the bathing of patients in salt water baths (4.5 g common salt per litre) twice daily, the areas being kept moist with soaks of the same solution between baths. The treatment is continued through to healing whether this involves grafting or not. From the second or third day post-graft, both graft and donor site receive the same treatment.

The results, confirmed by a series of patients whose care is documented in detailed colour photographs, are impressive. The more superficial injuries heal rapidly, the deeper areas become receptive for grafting in 3 to 4 weeks and most of the donor sites heal at around 7 days.

The introduction presents the statistics. It has to be noted that around 75% of the patients had burns of less than 20% of body surface area involved, and over 50% had under 10% involvement, but all ages were treated, about one-third being children under the age of 6 years. It is unfortunate that no attempt was made to present burn depth, difficult though this can be. Out of 1900 cases there were only 130 grafting procedures, suggesting either that a large number were superficial or that the method allows healing of deeper burns which would not be expected to heal by other accepted methods.

Despite the author's claim that "few nurses and few hours of work are required", it would seem to this reviewer that the twice daily bathing and the care of the saline soaks at all times, must make considerable demands both on nursing time and on the skills and experience of staff. There is, however, no doubt that much of the credit for the success of the method must go to Dr Al-Baker. This book is evidence of his personal involvement in delivery of good burn care using a simple, effective routine. In addition, he is to be congratulated on the quality of the Atlas and the clear documentation of the material.

A. B. SUTHERLAND

The Early Development of Morphology and Patterns of the Face in the Human Embryo. *Advances in Anatomy, Embryology and Cell Biology*, Vol. 98. By Klaus Hinrichsen. Pp. VII + 79 with 82 figures. (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, Tokyo: Springer-Verlag, 1985). Price DM 68 (soft cover).

In this monograph the author describes the scanning electron microscopic appearances of the developing faces of a series of human embryos. The SEM photographs are supplemented by appropriate sections and the findings discussed in relation to previous work. There is a useful list of references and an index. The study concentrates on the development of the nose and the primary and secondary palates with quick looks at the eye and ear.

The photographs are superb in their clarity and wealth of detail. They give the reader the feeling of flying over a changing landscape, and diving, for example, into the developing nasal cavities and landing to inspect and ponder on the degenerating ectodermal cells in their depths. The text keeps the non-embryologist firmly earthbound, being translated from the German into quaint and sometimes inaccurate English but it is well worth spending time on as, taken with the illustrations, it makes the early development of this difficult area beautifully clear. Some received ideas are shown to be false; the earliest signs of the "secondary" palate appear before those of the true "primary" palate and the nasal septum does not develop as a keel hanging from the roof of the nose but from before backwards as the palatal shelves fuse.

This study does not shed any new light on the mechanism of clefting although this malformation is discussed briefly. It illuminates the normal embryology of the area in a dramatic and beautiful way and, quite literally, lights up some hitherto dark corners. It can be recommended to anyone with an interest in facial development.

A. C. H. WATSON

Complications in Hand Surgery. By John A. Boswick. Pp. xiii + 401 with 386 figures and tables. (Philadelphia, London, Toronto, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney, Tokyo, Hong Kong: W. B. Saunders Co., 1986. Distributed by Holt-Saunders, Essex). Price £85.

This book presents the complications encountered in patients undergoing hand surgery. It is based on contributions from several authors and inevitably not all the chapters are of the same standard. It is presumably not written for experienced hand surgeons since they will have met most of the complications listed in the text. It will be most useful for the more junior surgeon as it identifies various pitfalls and warns of complications which may occur.

One criticism of the book is that many topics are dealt with rather superficially. Although it is stated that anatomy "needs to be known" and most of the topics start off with a review of the appropriate anatomy, this review is by no means detailed enough for the practising surgeon. For example there is a very inadequate description given of the origins of the flexor digitorum superficialis and the flexor digitorum profundus. Indeed it is quite difficult to understand the origins of these muscles from the description given. Again, the description of the course of the radial artery distal to the forearm is extremely vague.

It is of course a book written by experts and possibly they make certain operations seem very easy. Certainly not enough emphasis is laid on the difficulties of operating on the flexor tendons within zone 2 in the finger. On occasions operations are mentioned without identifying some of the complications, for example in describing the abductor digiti minimi transfer for opposition of the thumb, no mention is made of the considerable cosmetic defect which results on the ulnar side of the hand.

The problem of pain in an amputation stump is well recognised and it is well established that further amputation will not cure the pain unless there are specific reasons such as a tight amputation stump. In the chapter on complications following amputations of parts of the hand, this difficult problem is not really dealt with and it would have been a helpful inclusion in the chapter.

There is one noticeable mis-spelling in the caption describing the Grayson's ligaments where his name is spelt Gayson, which possibly implies something quite different!

When discussing congenital anomalies the term *camptodactyly* is used. The correct adjective for a congenitally flexed finger is *campylodactyly*. Also in the chapter on congenital anomalies, the term amputation is used when there are nubbins of rudimentary digits present. Possibly the term amputation here gives the wrong impression.

This is a well presented, most readable book which is beautifully illustrated and there are full references, and it certainly deserves a place in the literature concerning hand injuries. It would have been even better with a little more attention to detail and accuracy.

HUGH G. BROWN

Septo- and Rhinoplasty. By Finn Jeppesen. First Edition. Pp. 200 with 250 illustrations. (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1986). Price D.kr 350.

We are told in the foreword to this book that "it offers an excellent introduction to nasal surgery, can be used as a step-by-step 'cook book' before the operation and is extremely recommended to all ear, nose and throat surgeons". The author, Finn Jeppesen, does not vouchsafe to the reader what his position is and therefore it is difficult to know with what authority he writes upon the subject under consideration.

The book abounds with illustrations and detailed consideration of various aspects of nasal deformity and pathology, which are disconnected and do not form part of a step-by-step guide. The operation of septorhinoplasty is one of the most difficult in surgery, shrouded in difficulties and abounding with pitfalls. Regrettably, this book does nothing to illumine the gloom or to protect and guide the unwary.

There are available many books which treat this topic in a more satisfactory and helpful manner. To someone with a fair amount of experience with these procedures, it is difficult to follow, and for anyone lacking experience it is a recipe for confusion.

J. P. BENNETT

Early Treatment of Cleft Lip and Palate. Edited by M. Hotz, W. Gnoinski, M. Perko, H. Nussbaumer, E. Hof and R. Haubensak. Pp. 323 with 75 illustrations and 45 tables. (Toronto, Lewiston, New York, Bern, Stuttgart: Hans Huber, 1986). Price SFr 88.

This is a report of the proceedings of the 1984 Zürich Symposium with this title. It was the third of a series of similar meetings, the first of which was held in 1964, in which invited groups of experts in cleft lip and palate from around the world have discussed the current state of the art. On this occasion thirty-six centres were represented, three of which were from the United Kingdom.

The symposium started with a series of workshop sessions in which participants presented their experience and in particular how and why their management had changed over the last 20 years. The workshops were followed by panel discussions and summaries by the moderators of the sessions, all of which are recorded in full. This is the most interesting part of the book; all the techniques described have been reported elsewhere but it is very instructive to discover, with a little reading between the lines, whose work has made a deep impression on his colleagues and whose confident presentation disintegrated under interrogation.

A list of references accompanies each paper and there is a useful summary of the treatment regimens of every participating unit. The book is marred only by some appalling illustrations.

The topics addressed are mostly familiar and are almost entirely concerned with the effects of the timing and nature of surgery on maxillary growth, dentition and speech with little discussion of surgical detail. Some contributors have revised their enthusiasms and altered their practice since the first symposium, but not always in the same direction, and the variety of approaches remains bewildering. Nevertheless some trends are apparent. The Oslo technique of delayed bone grafting is clearly in the ascendancy and enthusiasm for late hard palate closure seems to be waning as poor speech results have become more widely recognised. Few participants other than the British and Australians still use a Veau-Wardill-Kilner pushback procedure. New approaches such as Malek's are described and Randall promotes Furlow's double reversing Z-plasty for soft palate closure, but it will be another twenty years before they can be properly evaluated.

This is an important book for those who are interested in the progress of cleft lip and palate surgery and the organisers of the meeting and the editors of the work must be congratulated on their achievements.

A. C. H. WATSON

An Anthology of Plastic Surgery. By Harry Hayes, Jr. Pp. xiii + 338, illustrated. (Maryland: Aspen Publishers Inc., 1986.) Price \$55.

Dr Hayes must have had fun gathering this collection of historical anecdotes, speculations, verse, paintings and other oddities, all of which have some connection with Plastic Surgery. Some of them come from original sources but most are from articles previously published in medical, and particularly plastic surgery, journals. Many are familiar but there will be something new to entertain or enlighten every reader. How many know, for example, that by an English Act of Parliament of 1649 (which has never been repealed) a marriage can be declared null and void and the woman declared a witch if she be convicted of betraying a man into matrimony by the use of "cosmetics . . . artificial teeth . . . high-heeled shoes and bolstered hips"? Could a plastic surgeon be declared an accessory to witchcraft? How many Scots know that Bonnie Prince Charlie had syndactyly or that the College from which this Journal is edited might, if someone had not slipped up, have the sole manufacturing rights of Scotch whisky? It makes a Fellow ponder on what might have been.

An anthology is, by its nature, a very mixed bag. One must admire the enthusiasm that so many surgeons have shown in exploring the byways of medical history. Much of the prose is of