

high quality but, on the evidence here, plastic surgeons should steer clear of verse! On the whole, they would also be better to leave wit to the professionals. A piece by S. J. Perelman and a savage caricature by Rowlandson set a standard that makes most of the efforts by the amateurs rather embarrassing but there are three delightful cartoons by Hugo Kaunen of Joseph, Gillies and McIndoe at work.

This is a book to be browsed through at leisure. It will give a great deal of pleasure and allow the bluffer to adorn his lectures with the appearance of erudition. What better present could one give a plastic surgeon?

A. C. H. WATSON

Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. By Martin Hatt. Pp. X+166 with 544 illustrations. (Stuttgart & New York: Georg Thieme, 1986). Price DM 128.

This is a short textbook on the surgery of the eyelids and lachrymal apparatus by an ophthalmic surgeon working in Zürich.

The best section is that on the lachrymal drainage system, with good description of repair of injured canaliculi and of conjunctivo-dacro-cystostomy and conjunctivo-rhinostomy which are generally not well covered in other publications.

The section on the treatment of tumours would be considered unsatisfactory by those who have responsibility for teaching in plastic surgery departments.

Reconstruction of defects of the eyelids is dealt with rather briefly and the description of free graft techniques is less extensive than their importance requires.

I. F. K. MUIR

Overcoming Disfigurement. Defeating the problems—physical, social and emotional. By Doreen Trust. First Edition. Pp. 176, no illustrations. (Wellingborough: Thorson's Publishing Group, 1986). Price £5.99 paperback.

This book is one in the series of "Life Crisis" books, which addresses single topics on medical and paramedical subjects as diverse as "Coping with Cancer", "Divorce" and "Living with a Colostomy".

The author, Doreen Trust, has concentrated her life for the last 25 years on helping disfigured people. She speaks from a background of personal experience. She has had no formal medical teaching and this is evident in the parts of the book dealing with medical subjects, but in some respects this is an advantage when she draws on her own and other people's experience at the hands of the medical profession.

Written in a popular style, the book is in three parts. The first part is an introduction to the subject of disfigurement and stigma

but there is an exaggerated emphasis on the role of leprosy in the historical sections. Chapter 3 on medical attitudes and progress is a very brief history of plastic surgery which unfortunately concentrates on a small selection of named personalities rather than on the skills which have been developed.

Chapter 5 is important in the understanding of Mrs Trust's basic philosophy of a total approach to disfigurement. The best way to eliminate the prejudice against people with a stigma is to educate the whole population, starting in the schools. However, even with universal acceptance this is a tragically slow process and will require at least half a century of hard effort for the word to spread through the population. Unfortunately, the bigoted adults who would benefit most from this message of tolerance are not those who will read this book.

Part 2, "Guidelines", should be read by anyone with an interest in handling children with congenital defects. There are valuable hints for parents, grandparents, patients and the medical profession. Chapter 13, with advice for a patient about how to make progress in a consultation with the general practitioner and get referred for a specialist opinion, is particularly useful for the lay person.

The final part, "The cosmetic component", is very interesting, giving good practical tips in using camouflage preparations, and discusses problems. For example, if manual dexterity has been lost, as in old age, it is going to be impossible for the patient to use camouflage effectively. Chapter 16 has lessons in proper application but illustrations would have made this section more useful to the reader.

As camouflage is only applicable in 20% of patients, the proper discussion of other techniques such as surgery is sadly lacking in this book. However, the interested doctor will probably gain from reading it if only to find out what his patients are being told.

A. McG. MORRIS

Brachial Plexus Injuries. By Robert D. Leffert. Pp. ix + 243 with 173 figures and tables. (New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne: Churchill Livingstone, 1985). Price £48.

The author has set out to synthesise his ongoing experience of the care of brachial plexus injuries with the work of others in the field.

The section on Anatomy contains an excellent account of the variation in form of the brachial plexus and this is illustrated by classic descriptions. The chapter on Closed Injury discusses the varieties of mechanism of injury, the particular problem of the intra-clavicular plexus injury, clinical assessment and recording. There are chapters on Congenital Palsy, Post-Anaesthetic Palsy, Open Wounds of the Brachial Plexus and Radiation Neuropathy. Conservative and surgical managements and peripheral reconstruction are reviewed.

The reviews of the literature are excellent, as are the sections on diagnosis, investigation and reconstructive techniques. The microsurgical aspects of brachial plexus grafting are, however, not covered in great depth and microsurgical techniques are therefore not illustrated. Vascularised nerve grafting is not discussed.