

laser user". Certainly, there are available a number of books which treat the specialty usage of the laser in a manner more helpful to the experienced laser user.

The book is concluded by a comprehensive and useful list of 33 appendices ranging from "practical tips for laser purchasing" to "lasers and the law" where possible scenarios for law suits are described.

It is tempting to compare this book with a not dissimilar British publication (*Medical Lasers: Current and Clinical Practice* by Carruth and McKenzie, published by Adam Hilger Ltd., 1986). It would be realised that laser users form such a heterogeneous group that it is quite difficult to meet adequately their differing requirements in a single publication.

In conclusion, this is a useful book to read before purchasing or installing a laser machine but it is felt that a plastic surgeon would not find it very helpful in the clinical situation.

A. A. QUABA

**Head and Hands, an Era in Plastic Surgery.** By Sir Benjamin K. Rank. Pp. x+292. (London: Gower Medical Publishing, 1987). Price £25.

Sir Benjamin's autobiography is a "damned good read". My wife enjoyed it as much as did I. It includes many black and white photographs. Starting with his arrival in London two years after his qualification in 1937, when the "Big Four" dominated plastic surgery in the UK and the Empire, he refers to medical practice arrangements there which "provided good reasons for the great upheaval that was soon to come to the British National Health Service" (page 6). He was trained by Rainsford Mowlem, mainly. From London he went to the Western Desert with the 2nd Australian General Hospital.

For most readers the early chapters are "history" with an informed commentary. The book is written to appeal both to plastic surgeons and to the lay public, and it contains many clinical records of dramatic cases presented in a colloquial style. Some are perhaps longer than their clinical content warrants. During the latter part of World War II Sir Benjamin had 100 beds for plastic surgery in Melbourne. The biography contains value judgements on many of the great of plastic and reconstructive surgery—fully acceptable from a man of Sir Benjamin's stature. His revelations about the demise of the Nuffield chair of plastic surgery are doubly interesting at a time when there is the possibility of a new chair in the UK.

After establishing the specialty in Australia, Sir Benjamin travelled widely, with greater ease than would have been possible for a UK NHS consultant. He gives the explanation on page 102: "Working in partnership or as a group not only provided an all day, every day availability and service to patients—it had two other advantages. It permitted easier escape from the scene—more frequent overseas visits to keep pace with developments elsewhere or to promote diffusion of teaching and practice through our own, as well as in neighbouring countries. It also allowed me to take a more active part in general hospital and professional affairs—an erstwhile obligation now, unfortunately, often sidestepped—this brought me into contact with some good leaders". America (1947), Singapore and Malaya (1953–54), India (1955, 1960 et al), Canada as Commonwealth Professor (1958) were influenced by his teaching and in his accounts are vignettes of political and medical personalities as well as elements of travelogue. Pakistan gets a bad press.

Because he played the key role in introducing the specialty into Australia, and the vital additional role of gaining for it there academic recognition, considerable space is devoted to the medical politics involved—but perhaps not too much when read with Australian eyes. The story ranges through the International Congress in Melbourne and the meeting in Holland in the year of his BAPS Presidency in 1965—the Leiden Meeting was the first I attended as a newly appointed consultant.

Along with his initial welcoming of the NHS in Britain and his later regret of its appalling bureaucratic machinery, Australia is not spared: "The whole package emanating from State intrusion has promoted the worst in professional people, right from the time of graduation when they now face wages board determinations—industrial relations hassle, hours on duty, overtime rates and such matters as never previously would have been thought of. Public attitudes, led by the media, bear witness to an all-time low in the esteem of the medical profession and to widespread dissatisfaction with one newfound 'system' after another, despite soaring costs to the taxpayer" (page 226). The hospital locker correspondence of page 238 could be duplicated in many an NHS consultant's files—it is too familiar to be funny! Interestingly, Sir Benjamin's last chapter is about a recent visit to Britain to see old colleagues and relatives—the UK is his plastic surgical Alma Mater.

A. F. WALLACE

**Principilization of Plastic Surgery.** By D. Ralph Millard, Jr. Pp. xxiii+685, illustrated. (Boston, Toronto: Little Brown & Co., 1986). Price £135. ISBN 0316 57153 9.

In 1957 Sir Harold Gillies and the young Ralph Millard published their classic work *The Principles and Art of Plastic Surgery* in which they set out 16 principles. One always suspected that, while the substance of this book belonged to the Master—Gillies, the style of writing and production owed much to the junior author. These suspicions were confirmed by the three volumes of *Cleft Craft*, and this new book by Dr Millard is clearly out of the same stable. Its title will doubtless raise a few eyebrows but the obvious title was already used for that other book 30 years ago and Dr Millard has merely applied his Principle 26—"Imagination sparks Innovation". For this book details 33 principles, mastery of which will give the plastic surgeon the weapons to overcome any clinical problem; indeed, many are of much wider application and indicate a philosophy of life.

Over the years the original 16 principles have been revised and their number expanded. Each one has a chapter to itself, grouped into sections. There are Preparational, Executorial, Innovational, Contributinal and Inspirational principles. Each is illustrated by cases and anecdotes. The author's friends—eminent colleagues and ex-trainees—were asked to contribute cases that illustrated what they felt to be important plastic surgery principles, and many are included while other examples are drawn from outside the field of medicine. At heart, however, this is the summation of Dr Millard's own experience and thinking over a long career. He reviews almost every one of the many contributions he has made to Plastic Surgery, deriving lessons from each. Many of the cases have therefore been published before and there is considerable overlap and repetition but the author defends himself stoutly on this charge, quoting

Earle Peacock's comment, "If you feed a horse enough oats, some may get through for the sparrows!"

The book is handsomely produced in the familiar style with large, clear print (important points now emphasised in blue), wide margins studded with clear photographs and drawings, and a number of full-page colour plates. References are collected at the end and there is a useful index.

This is a highly idiosyncratic work, full of the quirks and flamboyance that are typical of this most individual of teachers and writers and which have sometimes irritated his critics in the past. They may do so still. But it is exciting to read, indeed it is hard to put down and the message that is driven home is one which Dr Millard is uniquely qualified to give: never be content simply to be a "hole filler" but "Go for Broke" (Principle 32); always strive after perfection. The superb results shown in the illustrations are eloquent proof of his adherence to this, most important of his principles.

Reading this book brought back to this reviewer the sense of exhilaration which he experienced during the six months he was privileged to spend with the author, and which must have been known by all his trainees. Now it is possible for all to share in Dr Millard's enthusiasm. The young plastic surgeon will be stimulated by his quest for the highest standards and, with luck, the older and more jaded practitioner may be enticed out of his routine.

A. C. H. WATSON

**Surgery of Facial Bone Fractures.** Edited by Craig A. Foster and John E. Sherman. Pp. xvii + 285 with 271 figures. (New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne: Churchill Livingstone, 1987). Price £57.50. ISBN 0443 08436 X.

In the foreword to this book, a multi-author volume, Ian Jackson writes that the discerning have realised that there has been a glaring deficiency in the North American literature for a book describing the modern management of facial trauma. This book has been designed to fill that vacuum.

Most of us in times of need have readily turned to a well-thumbed Rowe and Killey and have been impressed by the most recent edition. Drs Foster and Sherman have edited a succinct and readable volume, which ranges from the evaluation of the injured patient to injuries of specialised structures.

This book is well illustrated with photographs, drawings and radiographs. The chapter references are comprehensive and adequately represent the world literature; there is also included a suggested reading list which is most useful.

Most chapters contain a section on the complications of the various injuries but little on the complication of treatment. Line diagrams ably show what is theoretically possible but their practical application frequently falls short of the ideal. This applies particularly to orbital and naso-lacrimal injuries. There is a practical discussion on the use of rigid internal fixation of mandibular fractures and rigid external fixation. Rather disappointingly, they are not compared and contrasted.

This is a commendable volume which will provide a ready, "not too heavy" reference book for those actively engaged in the treatment of facial injuries. The students and postgraduates will be well pleased. A place should be found for it on the library shelves.

N. M. BREACH

**Year Book of Hand Surgery 1987.** Edited by James H. Dobyns, Robert A. Chase and Peter C. Amadio. Pp. 330 with 89 figures. (Chicago, London: Year Book Medical Publishers, 1987). Price £36.50. ISBN 0 8151 2639 5.

Editors Dobyns, Chase and Amadio have called upon sixteen of their colleagues from the Mayo Clinic and Stanford University to act as reviewers of recent editions of some forty-one Journals. Publications relevant to Hand Surgery have been extracted, summarised, categorised and presented under eighteen chapter headings varying from Diagnosis and Evaluation to Compression Neuropathies and Arthritis, and ending in Research in Hand Surgery. Stress Syndromes, Anatomy and Biomechanics each now occupy a chapter in their own right. This Herculean task has been achieved with some speed and efficiency as the bulk of the publications appeared in the literature of 1985.

In spite of the many sources of the material and the many reviewers involved, the test has achieved a uniformly succinct consistency. The "guts" of each publication is presented as a piece of continuous prose, approximately a page in length, and is supported, where necessary, by illustrations copied from the original article. Most of the photographs and illustrations are of good quality, but figure 17.3 has not retained its clarity on reduction. A subject and author index permit rapid location of any particular topic of interest to the reader.

With an ever-increasing volume of hand surgery literature, the role of this book becomes indispensable. It provides for the busy practitioner a unique opportunity to familiarise himself quickly with a wide range of relevant publications. At a price of just above £36, this book deserves a place in all medical and departmental libraries and will be a revelation to those surgeons who find it difficult to delve beyond the mainstream Journals.

R. E. PAGE

**Vascular Birthmarks—Pathogenesis and Management.** Edited by Terence J. Ryan and George W. Cherry. Pp. xiii + 203 with 78 figures and tables. (Oxford, New York, Tokyo: Oxford University Press, 1987). Price £30. ISBN 0 19 261628 5.

This is a multi-author book written by a group of enthusiasts from both sides of the Atlantic and edited by two well-known authors from the dermatology department in Oxford. The preface states that the objective of the book is "to assemble current knowledge and management from all interested specialists, as well as to provide a thorough understanding of haemangiomas (vascular malformations)." This it achieves admirably, although I do have some reservations. I was sometimes left wondering if "vascular malformations" might have been a better title. A birthmark is, after all, something present at birth. The erudite discussion of acquired conditions in Chapter 4 is misplaced in the book with its present title. There are also problems with repetitions and inconsistencies that may stem from the multiple authorship.

The clarification of classification of vascular malformations by Pasyk in Chapter 1 is particularly welcome and thorough. It is based on the growth and involution of haemangiomas, as well as on the static or adynamic behaviour of port wine stains, and helps to clear the confusion of previous classifications. It was disappointing, therefore, to find that Pasyk's classification was not used throughout the book. For instance, the author in