



## Book Reviews

**Cutaneous Facial Surgery.** Eds. J. Regan Thomas and James Roller. (NY, Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc.; Stuttgart, NY, Georg Thieme Verlag, 1992). Pp xii + 208, ill. ISBN 0-86577-398-X. Price \$95.

Described as a "how to do it" text, this book is produced by a plastic surgeon and a dermatologist. Their aim is to discuss facial surgery suitable for execution in the office setting. Contributors have been asked to include "pearls" derived from personal experience - much useful advice is given, albeit with a heavy bias towards management as practised in the USA. At a time when authors are all too reluctant to express their own views, this gives the book considerable strength.

The production is excellent, with a mixture of line, colour and black and white illustrations - post-operative views are under-exposed too often, however. The sections on pathology, skin flaps and skin grafts are inadequate in breadth and depth. The advice given on scar revision, acne, dermabrasion and chemical peel is hard to fault, but the inclusion of alopecia in a text on facial surgery is hard to fathom. The best chapter is the last in the book on cosmetic and corrective make-up. The text is written in a chatty style and introduces several new words to the English language.

This field is already saturated with publications, consequently it is difficult to justify production of yet another, unless sufficiently good to become a market leader. This book falls short of this standard and, though worth reading, cannot be recommended for purchase.

A. D. MCGREGOR

**International Surgical Practice.** Edited by David J. Leaper and Frank J. Branicki. (Oxford University Press, 1992) Pp. 416. ISBN 0-19-261999-3. Price £27.50.

At a time when there is renewed interest in surgical practice abroad, particularly in developing countries, it is heartening to read this book. It sets out the experience of surgeons from all four corners of the globe on a wide variety of general surgical procedures, ranging from surgery for HIV-infected patients (from Zambia) to new techniques in the management of urinary calculus (from Singapore). The book originated from the experience of the editors at the University of Hong Kong and the list of contents suggests a series of guest lectures with no common theme apart from their being of current interest. It is to be admitted that the only chapter directly related to Plastic Surgery is that on surgery of the parotid (from Kuwait), so the book is unlikely to find its way onto many plastic surgeons' bookshelves. However it should be read by all surgeons preparing for the FRCS examination and should be available in all medical school and hospital libraries. It is a book to be read to increase one's knowledge of general surgery rather than to be used as a text book. This is enhanced by the attractive lay out and uniform style, which make it an easy book to read. The editors are to be congratulated on assembling such a diverse and stimulating book from twenty nine authors in sixteen different countries. In so doing they fully justify the title of International Surgical Practice.

J. H. JAMES

**La main traumatique. 1. L'urgence.** Edited by M. Merle and G. Dautel. (Paris, Milan, Barcelona, Bonn, Masson, 1992). ISBN 2-225-82758-3. Pp xiv + 328; 944 figs. Price 895F.

"La main traumatique" is offered by Dr M. Merle and Dr G. Dautel and published by Masson Paris 1992 ISBN 2-225-82758-3. Dr Merle and Dr Dautel have brought together a number of their colleagues from Nancy with Professor Loda from Buenos Aires and

Dr Vaienti from Milan to produce a book which was dedicated to the memory of Professor Jacques Michon.

The book's main purpose is to bring together the essentials of surgery of acute trauma to the hand and upper limb. This is covered in seventeen chapters, which can be divided into an introductory section, covering anaesthesia, instrumentation and assessment, a second section on simple orthopaedics, including fractures and sprains, the principles of revascularisation and skin cover and then specific chapters covering the areas that are commonly covered such as flexor tendon injuries, extensor tendon injuries, amputations, nail bed injuries and other injuries. There is a specific chapter on digital reimplantation and reimplantation of the hand. The chapter on "le doigt-banque", using free tissue from unreimplantable fingers, is of particular interest. The final chapter of reeducation of hand injuries concludes this book of 327 pages.

The book's intention to educate those dealing with trauma and providing a reference for techniques is fulfilled. Dr Merle and Dr Dautel clearly have a wide experience and have been able to bring this experience to the trainee and to the more experienced surgeon who would wish to pick up additional techniques. The style is good, but of course it is written in French and unless the reader is prepared to sit with a medical French-English dictionary, the thrust and style of the presentation is somewhat diminished. However, the logical presentation, the good illustrations and the quite exceptionally good line drawings serve to take the reader through this book in a logical and simple manner. The illustrations remain close to the text and are not dispersed. The references are not exhaustive, but certainly present the major work on each of the chapters and are enhanced by the use of German as well as French, Italian, English and North American papers, bringing together a cosmopolitan view of the problem and its treatment. The book is in A4 size, is presented well, is easy to read from the index, which is very clearly presented. The quality of paper is good, the quality of print and reproduction of the line drawings is excellent, the binding of the book is in hard back and appears to be technically well bound and at 895 francs (approximately £95-£100) appears to be very good value for money and appropriate for the market, which I would see as principally trainees in hand surgery and plastic surgeons and orthopaedic surgeons who are charged with dealing with a traumatic episode in the hand. If translated into English, I would most certainly recommend it to those trainees who deal with hand surgery and I would recommend a copy be kept in the theatre suite so that it is constantly available. I note that it is the first of a series of books. The remaining volumes will no doubt be covering other aspects of hand surgery.

J. K. STANLEY

**Critical care of the burned patient.** Ed. Lindsey T. A. Rylah. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992). ISBN 0-521-39495-3. Pp. xvi + 206, ill. Price £35.

The purpose of this book, edited by L. T. A. Rylah, is supposedly to offer a practical guide to junior medical staff who may be involved in treating burned patients.

Unfortunately, the title is misleading and the book sadly loses itself into treating non-critical care patients. Some of the authors are experts in the field, but these are the American authors and, unfortunately, a lot of their views are not those held or practised in the United Kingdom. The book is also supposedly aimed as a practical guide, but there is no stepwise logical order or guidance to treatment of a critical care burned patient, who eventually may undergo a host of multisystem organ failures. What would be required is guidance on how to treat each of the critical care eventualities, but this is sadly lacking.

After a basic start, the second chapter is very simplistic and inadequately describes how to assess the depth of thermal injury. It is glaringly obvious that colour photographs of the various levels of

burn injury would be more appropriate in this chapter. In addition, to classify burns simply as 'minor' or 'major' based in adults on a burn size greater than or less than 20% in the United Kingdom is inappropriate.

Some of the diagrams throughout the book are of extremely poor quality and a lot of the data is borrowed from previous publications and other authors. I was somewhat concerned about the positioning of escharotomies in full thickness burns, not least because, around the wrist, the ulnar nerve would be at risk of surgical division. There is a lot of needless repetition throughout the book, particularly on resuscitation. The chapter on 'Fluid Resuscitation' is probably unique in that it incorporates the commonly used U.K. formula in addition to two American techniques and this is probably the best feature in the book.

There are chapters on paediatric care and on infection in burned patients. Both of these make no mention of Toxic Shock Syndrome, which is occurring more frequently in U.K. units, and which it is vital to recognise and treat at an early stage. A brief paragraph is mentioned right at the end of the book, but does not carry the relevant references.

There is a visible omission regarding recommended antibiotic guidelines for use in Burn Units and there is no mention of the commonest organisms inhabiting burns both in the U.K. and in America. If this book is designed for a non-burn trained clinician operating in a remote hospital, then this would have been useful. There are some other obvious omissions, such as the management of chemical burns, but clearly one cannot be too critical of this book as it is only 200 pages. There are times when it is immensely simplistic and there are some chapters which diversify into extreme rarities which are not that relevant to this type of book.

The physical presentation of the book is good. It is not quite small enough to be carried in the pocket of a junior hospital doctor, but then it is not really a practical guide that would be of use in the emergency situation. The printing quality is good and easy to follow.

At £35.00, it is a very cheap book but there are many that are only slightly more expensive which contain more adequate information.

I do not think this book is UK oriented enough to be relevant to working practice in the British Burns Units and I don't think it is relevant to trainee burn surgeons in America, as there are many more detailed publications relevant to their system of management. It is a sad fact that the British and American systems of burn care management are so different that this book is relevant to neither.

J. D. FRAME

**The Surgical Management of Deformities in Leprosy and Other Peripheral Neuropathies.** By Noshir H. Antia, Carl D. Enna and Behman M. Daver. (Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Oxford University Press, 1992). ISBN 0 19 563058 0. Pp. viii + 162, ill. Price Rs. 475.

The authors of this book make a statement in the preface that "their combined experience dates to the fifties and they have thus been able to overview the development of reconstructive surgery in leprosy from its very inception. The result is a fund of information and practical knowledge which will be useful to all surgeons working with patients with peripheral nerve disease".

This will appear to be fully justified to anyone who reads the book. It is written in lucid, simple English, is packed from cover to cover with an enormous fund of useful information, and the numerous illustrations, particularly the line drawings, are a delight and are extremely useful in understanding the subject. The clinical photographs are a shade inferior but the printing is workmanlike and accounts for some less than ideal reproductions. Written in a style somewhere in between a handbook and a text book, this will be invaluable for any clinician engaged in any form of reconstructive surgery in this area. The book is sold in India for Rs. 475/- (approximately £10) and is a virtual windfall. It is also reassuring to know that simple inexpensive books such as these can be so worthwhile. One's only regret is that the scope of the book did not allow a chapter on epidemiological and social and preventive aspects of the disease for which the first author of the book has won laurels in India.

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