

Epidemiology diagnosis and screening are fairly standard comprehensive chapters. Mammography is covered very well and the quality of reproduction of mammograms is exceptionally good. A chapter on pathology of breast cancer is brief but clear, with a modern logical classification which includes the rarer forms of tumours within the breast.

The chapter on surgery describes the technique of the different operations in considerable detail and endocrine therapy and chemotherapy are well covered. Less common aspects (e.g. tumour growth rate, cancer in pregnancy, pathogenesis of lymphoedema) are also covered particularly well. Chapters on psychological care and nursing (including that of radiotherapy) are interesting and helpful but the last one on statistical methods will probably leave practising surgeons cold.

Donegan and Spratt is highly recommended and at £17.00 is good value for money—perhaps on a pages/pound ratio even as good value as Haagensen.

L. E. HUGHES

BIOMATERIALS. Edited by G. W. HASTINGS and S. D. BRUCK. Quarterly. Published by IPC Science and Technology Press Ltd., Guildford, Surrey. Annual subscription £45.

This new international quarterly journal is intended to help dissemination of knowledge of the properties, potential hazards and clinical application of the various biomaterials used in medical and surgical research and clinical practice.

A glance at the titles of some of the papers in this first issue (January, 1980) will give some idea of the projected scope of the Journal:

An in-vitro study of mechanical fatigue in glutaraldehyde treated porcine aortic valve tissue.

Fatigue test machine for denture base polymers.

Controlled release of multi-component cytotoxic agents from radiation polymerized composites.

Problems of encapsulation of total joint replacements.

Carbon fibre reinforced epoxy as a high strength, low modulus material for internal fixation plates.

As one would expect, some of the papers are highly technical, but others are of immediate clinical importance. This first volume is an impressive publication and we wish it well. Its cost may put it beyond the library budget of most plastic surgery units, but it is a journal to be noted and consulted by all those working with new synthetic or naturally-occurring biomaterials.

MICHAEL N. TEMPEST

ESSENTIALS OF PLASTIC SURGERY. By WILLIAM M. COCKE, JR., RICHARD H. MCSHANE and JOHN S. SILVERTON. Pp. ix+211 with 140 illustrations. (Little, Brown and Company, Boston) 1979. \$12.50.

This volume is the joint effort of three authors, two working in California and the third in New York. The book is beautifully printed and its superb lay-out is a credit to the Publishers. Its aim, as stated in the preface is . . . "to present basic information about plastic surgery in a straightforward way. It is concise but informative. It does not overwhelm nor is it, we hope, too brief an overview. We would like the student to be able to pick up the text, read it in a few days and feel that he or she has a grasp of the specialty".

Quite so: but it would probably be wiser to read "glimpse" instead of the word "grasp". The book really deals with the scope rather than the essentials of the specialty. The chapters are well designed, the subject matter is up to date and the style of writing is refreshingly free and easy. But there is a tendency to use brackets to enclose statements that are sentences in their own right, the word débridement is misused every time it appears and there are some strange misprints that should have been picked up: "elastimers", "filtral column", "hypertelism" and "Camiesburn".

At the end of the volume there is a list of "Selected Readings" for those who wish to develop and deepen their knowledge of plastic surgery. The choice of reading material is intriguing, particularly the omission of the two books which are regarded as essential reading for all plastic surgery trainees on both sides of the Atlantic. In their introduction, the authors of this book treat us to a short dissertation on the etymological derivation of the word "plastic" and refer us to the Greek πλαστικός and the Latin equivalent plasticus. Perhaps they might like to look up and ponder over another classical word beginning with pl- in their etymological dictionary: plagiarism or literary theft. This may have something to do with their reluctance to include Ian McGregor's book or Grabb and Smith in their list of 'Selected Readings'. As Editor of this Journal, I was surprised to see that two of their illustrations (10, 4B and C) were published in this Journal in January, 1978 (Vol. 31, p. 60 and 61). No acknowledgement is made of this in the book, and no permission was sought from our Editorial Office or the Publishers.

If a second edition of this volume is contemplated, may we hope that the courtesies of copyright will be observed and that due credit will be given to the work of others?

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