

## Book Reviews

**Stable Fixation of the Hand and Wrist.** By A. E. Freeland, M. E. Jabalay and J. L. Hughes. Pp. xiii + 285 with 960 illustrations. (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, London, Paris, Tokyo: Springer-Verlag, 1986. Distributed in Japan by Igaku Shoin, Tokyo). Price DM 230. ISBN 3 540 96300 6.

The book is broken up into three sections, the first being an interesting history of internal fixation with chapters on bone healing and mini fragment technique. It closes with a valuable bibliography of these subjects.

Section 2 forms the majority of the book and is concerned with the management of specific fractures, which are subdivided into 30 varieties. The authors describe the book as a panorama of examples where internal fixation has been used. It does not pretend to offer firm advice as to the indications for internal fixation. It seems likely from the examples that the surgeons are operating more frequently on hand fractures than perhaps the average European surgeon and there is an example of an AO plate applied to a displaced but not comminuted transverse midshaft proximal phalanx fracture. The examples are interesting but surgeons dealing with hand fractures will be wondering how many cases have been treated in that manner and with what average result. This information the book is unable to provide.

I was disappointed in the length of the section on scaphoid fractures. This is an area where perhaps more information could have been given but it is possible that the Herbert screw appeared on the market too late to be fully quantified by this publication. Nevertheless, five pages and little text was, I felt, disappointing.

The third section deals with internal fixation for delayed union and non-union. The examples are interesting, with many probably being "one-off" cases with limited general application.

A significant omission was the absence of information concerning rehabilitation of the hand following internal fixation. This is a crucial part of any internal fixation management programme and would have been a worthwhile inclusion. Although the authors have stated that their aim is to avoid being didactic, I feel perhaps a little more guidance on the role of rigid internal fixation in hand fractures would have made this publication more valuable for surgeons in training. Nevertheless, it is a most interesting book, revealing what can be achieved by these techniques.

F. D. BURKE

**Pathology for Surgeons.** By P. C. H. Watt and R. A. J. Spence. Pp. xv + 707 with 313 figures and tables. (Bristol: Wright, 1986). Price £35.

This book is a welcome addition to its genre and a worthy competitor to other well-known and established works. The preface states that it is intended principally for surgeons in training, who are preparing for the final examination for admission as Fellows to one of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons.

It is perhaps expedient that the Editor should have asked a Registrar in Plastic Surgery to be the reviewer! It is also aimed at more senior surgeons who want a summary of some subject outside their own field of interest—a position in which plastic surgeons often find themselves.

So how does it succeed? It has a clear, concise format laid out on traditional lines and is a pleasure to read. I found it reasonably comprehensive and well illustrated and its references are up-to-date. The authors are two men from Belfast who recently have sat the FRCS themselves. They have taken great pains to address subjects where there have been recent advances and areas of controversy. They do, for instance, include details on the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. There is also commendable detail about the merits and roles of different types of biopsy procedures in diseases affecting the breast, thyroid and parotid glands as well as practical suggestions about correct biopsy technique.

The book deals fairly well with disorders of the skin, although I must criticise its failure to mention sub-ungual melanoma. I was surprised to find no section on the mechanism of union in fractures in the chapter on Bones and Joints. Certainly, this is a hoary old chestnut in the Pathology viva. Chapter 22, Gynaecological Emergencies, had a far greater clinical emphasis than the other chapters, at the expense of pathological detail, and I felt it would be better suited to a surgical text rather than a pathology one, albeit a pathology for surgeons.

On balance, I thought it was a good book and I agree with Terence Kennedy who wrote the Foreword, in that I also wish this book had been around when I was working for Fellowship. However, specialist Fellowship-sitters may need that little bit extra.

J. H. PALMER

**1986 Year Book of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.** Edited by Frederick J. McCoy. Pp. 349 with 114 figs. (Chicago, London: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc., 1986). Price £45.

This is one of the "year book" series of thirty-three annual publications. The editor and his five associates have personally reviewed no less than 58 journals and present in précis form those papers which they felt to be most significant. Brief editorial comments are added from time to time. Some of the journals are not ones in which it might be expected to find articles of particular relevance to the plastic surgeon, which makes them particularly valuable. The abstracts are presented under the headings of Congenital Abnormalities; Neoplastic, Inflammatory and Degenerative Diseases; Trauma; Aesthetic Surgery; Breast; Flaps, Grafts and Transplants; and General Topics.

The editor states that the selections reflect interest in flaps based on studies of cutaneous and musculocutaneous vascular fields, tissue expansion and breast surgery, though the entire spectrum of reconstructive surgery is covered.

This is not a book which many individuals are likely to purchase, with the exception of a few dedicated readers who wish to refresh their knowledge of the up-to-date literature of the entire specialty. However, it should be in every departmental library as a convenient source of reference for the trainee or prospective author, or for the more experienced surgeon to dip into on a specific topic. In this rôle it will be a valuable volume.

A. G. LEONARD