Books received

Atlas of Bronchitis. By K. MORGENROTH AND M. T. NEWHOUSE. Pp. 106, illustrated. Butterworth Scientific, London, Boston, Singapore, Sydney, Wellington, Durban, Toronto, 1983. £22.50.

Bone and Joint Disease in the Elderly. Edited by V. WRIGHT. Medicine in Old Age Series. Pp. 305, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £20.00.

Case Histories in Psychiatry. By EAMONN FOTTRELL. Pp. 328. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £6.95.

Control of Respiration. Edited by D. J. PALLOT. Pp. 329, illustrated. Croom Helm, London, Canberra, 1983. £19.95.

Disorders of Thrombin Formation. Edited by ROBERT W. COLMAN. Methods in Hematology Series, volume 7. Pp. xi + 161, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1983. £25.00.

Eleventh Annual Report. Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction. World Health Organization. Pp. 159, illustrated. Geneva, World Health Organization, 1982. Price not given.

From Woman to Woman. By LUCIENNE LANSON. Revised, updated and expanded edition. Pp. 442, illustrated. Penguin Books, London, 1983. £3.50.

An Introduction to Community Medicine. CHARLES DU V. FLOREY, PETER BURNEY, MICHAEL D'SOUZA, ELLIE SCRIVENS, PETER WEST. Pp. vi + 134, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £3.95.

Hearing and Balance in the Elderly. Edited by RONALD HINCHCLIFFE. Medicine in Old Age Series. Pp. x + 521, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £32.00.

The Physiology of Hemostasis. By DEREK OGSTON. Pp. 378, illustrated. Croom Helm, London, Canberra, 1983. £19.95.

Progress in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Volume 3. Edited by JOHN STUDD. Pp. 353, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £15.00.

Understanding Back Pain. Patient Handbook 13. By R. W. PORTER. Pp. 66, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £1.40.

Book reviews

Antibiotics for Surgical Infections

Antimicrobial Chemotherapy Series. By P. J. SANDERSON. Pp. vii + 262. Research Studies Press, A Division of John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, New York, Brisbane, Toronto, Singapore. £24.50.

Surgeons would welcome a comprehensive, concise and well-ordered textbook on available agents for prophylaxis and treatment of surgical infections. There has been an explosion of new antimicrobial agents available to surgeons during the past 10 years. Many surgeons are confused with the range of new agents and wish to receive clear guidelines as to whether newer agents have any advantage over well-tried compounds that have been in use for many years.

Dr Sanderson has provided an extensive review of antibiotics which are currently available for surgical infections. Unfortunately the book is not completely up to date and not all of the newer agents are mentioned. The author not only covers aspects of available antimicrobials but also provides extensive information on the microbiological reporting of bacterial isolates, their use in a wide range of surgical practice and information regarding the use of antimicrobials in special clinical situations. Apart from general surgery the following subjects are also considered: obstetrics and gynaecology, peripheral vascular and cardiac surgery, respiratory infection, burns, therapy in intensive care units, orthopaedic surgery and urology. In certain sections of the book the author also strays into aspects of aetiology, pathogenesis, and in some cases diagnosis as well. As a consequence, the book is longer than is absolutely necessary for its title and there are certain sections which I doubt are of great importance to surgeons, such as the aetiology of gastroenteritis, intestinal worms, superficial infection in abattoir workers and drug addicts. The section on antimicrobial prophylaxis is far too short and most general surgeons would wish a much more extensive review of this subject with clear guidelines as to which agents should be used, in what patients, and for how long. The use of typeset would

have been excusable if the text had been thoroughly up to date as there were few references of reported work after 1980.

There is a need for a concise book on the use of antibiotics in surgical practice. However, I suspect that most of the important information could be incorporated into a small textbook of not more than 80 pages with clear tables.

M. R. B. KEIGHLEY
Department of Surgery,
University of Birmingham,
General Hospital,
Birmingham B4 6NA.

Chest Medicine

Edited by R. B. GEORGE, R. W. LIGHT and R. A. MATTHAY. Pp. x + 657, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1983. £35.00.

This is a good book, if not a great book—but it is undoubtedly an expensive book, at least in Britain, where it must on financial grounds alone compete with other 'definitive' texts such as Crofton and Douglas, *Respiratory Diseases*, 3rd Edition (Blackwell Scientific Publications) and Emerson, *Thoracic Medicine 1981* (Butterworths).

It is written for medical, nursing, and respiratory therapy students and will certainly provide them with a wealth of information directly relevant to today's practice of respiratory medicine. The three editors (with another 10 collaborators) are all actively engaged in practice research and teaching in this discipline. Their high reputation as research workers led this reviewer to have very high expectations, which unfortunately were not always entirely fulfilled.

Thus the first third of the book, describing the anatomical and physiological basis of respiratory medicine, whilst fully competent tends to be a rather uncritical statement of conventional views, often of 5 or 10 years standing, yet lack the critical assessment from the active practical clinician that these authors might have provided. Thus the concept of small airways disease, and the notion that its

early detection might allow intervention measures to prevent subsequent disabling chronic bronchitis and emphysema (which has now been around for some 16 years), has surely had time enough to begin to see if it really was a worthwhile notion. The authors do not give us their views, nor indeed do they review the little evidence that might question the hypothesis, and in particular fail to quote some of the best work relating pathological changes in the lungs to the physiological studies which purport to reveal small airways disease in life. For example, they refer to frequency dependence of compliance as an index of small airways disease, but omit reference to later work showing how unreliable this test is even in normal subjects. Again one would take issue with their claim that cyanosis requires the presence of 5g of reduced haemoglobin per 100 ml of blood—which the oxygen dissociation curve illustrates will only be present if the patient is already severely hypoxic.

The second section 'assembling the data base'—which might be translated for British readers as taking a history, examining the patient, and description of further investigations—is mostly excellent. However, perhaps even here the reviewer may be allowed a few quibbles—hoarseness is of major importance if it lasts for more than 3 weeks, and although it may be true that haemoptysis can occur in chronic bronchitis and emphysema, surely the suspicious clinician should only accept this when he has failed to find any other cause. Failure to emphasise that it is the deep jugular vein which is important to find engorged, and the notion that hyper-resonance is a feature of emphysema are also foreign to British practice. Investigations, notably of pleural effusion and methods of obtaining bacteriologic or tissue diagnoses are very well reviewed, with the sensible recognition of the risks of over-invasive study—and interestingly they still advocate transbronchial biopsy in the first instance to diagnose fibrosing alveolitis.

Clinical descriptions are exhaustive, from asthma, via the Churg-Strauss syndrome, to histoplasmosis, and as is proper with any book on this topic, is the main core of the information presented. Differences are those of opinion and of practice on both sides of the Atlantic. As usual British physicians will find advice on the management of asthma at variance with that commonly followed here, with the customary emphasis on theophyllines, and still cautious consideration of the role of inhaled beta₂ agonists—for salbutamol (Albuterol) possibly only came on the market in North America when this book was being written—or even with the printers! However, it does seem rather strange that so little emphasis is given to steroids as the primary therapy for acute severe asthma, and as a preventive therapy, in inhaled form, for chronic asthma. Regrettably, at least in the mind of this reviewer, the authors still allow the old saw that the 'blue and bloated' syndrome of what they term chronic obstructive lung disease is related to chronic bronchitis, whereas the 'pink and puffing' means that the patient has emphysema. It seems sad that they fail to quote Thurlbeck's definitive monograph which largely gave the lie to this by now outdated notion, and that they equally still perpetuate the myth that emphysema can be 'usually diagnosed accurately by the radiologist'—again without referring to the important paper by Thurlbeck and Simon (Thurlbeck, W.M. and Simon G. (1978) Radiographic appearances of the chest in emphysema. *American Journal of Roentgenology*, 130, 429). The section on respiratory infections is particularly valuable for its consideration of pneumonia in the immune compromised host, for clearly the authors speak from a wealth of practical day to day clinical experience, and this section alone would make the book a valuable addition to the physician's bookshelf in Britain. Equally admirable is the section on lung cancer, an authoritative review supported by adequate referencing—at least until about 1980, but there is no mention of the role of gallium scanning in peripheral tumours, nor the CAT scan to estimate spread to hilar or mediastinal structures.

Indeed throughout the references seem to stop at 1980–1981 at the latest, which must lead to some omissions in a field moving so rapidly as today's respiratory medicine. Although a few years ago this would have seemed entirely in keeping, both these same publishers (Churchill Livingstone in their Recent Advances series, and John Wiley & Sons, as in Bone's Pulmonary Disease Reviews),

do manage to get things in a bit faster. Clearly this is always a problem for definitive textbooks, and one has an uneasy feeling that it would have been fairer to the industry of these editors if their book had the date 1982, and not 1983.

Despite these minor differences between reviewer and editors, I conclude that this volume is one of the best comprehensive, yet concise accounts of respiratory medicine to emerge from North America in the last several years. However, differences in therapeutic approach, particularly for different availability of drugs in the United Kingdom to the United States must mean that the practice described is not always directly equivalent, yet the book will provide the British physician with an admirable overview of the State of the Art in respiratory medicine in the U.S. at least in 1982.

D. C. FLENLEY
City Hospital,
Edinburgh EH10 5SB.

A Colour Atlas of Clinical Neurology

By M. PARSONS. Pp. 216, illustrated. Wolfe Medical Publications, London, 1983. £35.00.

Those assiduous collectors of pictures and other graphic records of their patients occasionally succumb to the temptation of formally placing them on record for posterity. To succeed, they must be more than the evidence of one man's labours; and although often arousing a temporary curiosity as to what the other fellow is doing, an atlas must be more than this to be an implement of teaching.

Dr Parsons introduces his atlas (surely more than a globe or collection of maps) by avowing his intent to provide an understanding of the significance of physical signs and their investigations. He succeeds. His book contains an impressive collection of over 600 figures: clinical photographs, line diagrams, neuropathological specimens, graphs and many radiographs and scans. And, as spice for the 'older student', he includes reproductions of figures from classic historical papers ranging from Charcot Bouchard aneurysms to the cerebral venous thrombosis of Gordon Holmes and Percy Sargent (1915).

The text ranges widely from cortical disorders, strokes, tumours, blackouts and paraplegia to peripheral nerve and muscle diseases. A book of this size cannot be comprehensive and must be used by students as an entertaining but nonetheless informative supplement to standard teaching and textbooks. Indeed, it should stimulate more attention to the meticulous clerking of patients, analysis of their clinical signs and pursuit of their progress—so often forgotten in the hurly-burly of the student's life. Parson's writing is precise and pointed, opinionated and thereby stimulating. It shows a clinician's approach and reflects a clinician's healthy scepticism to the modern excesses of investigation and to what he rightly describes as 'the victims of management by committee'.

Each section is prefaced by a short clinical statement, each a valuable vignette; the accompanying pictures and figures are annotated, often by instructive case histories. These are without doubt an excellent method of teaching (the visual cortex being far more extensive than the auditory cortex, as Spillane remarked in his highly acclaimed atlas). If at times the condensing of material leads to oversimplification, we forgive this, though the views of one teacher should permit of other opinions. For example, in hypertensive stroke is 'angiography contraindicated because there is a higher risk of complications...' (p. 308) or would not most of us control the blood pressure and pursue angiography in at least some such patients, e.g. those with a neck bruit? Is it true of the EEG in the diagnosis of tumours that 'within certain limits this simple investigation is of great value...' Or have not isotope scans and above all CT rendered the EEG obsolete in this context?

Textual errors are very few, and one's only other observation is that the average student will need much more explicit legends to take him through the anatomical complexities of some of the scans, and neuropathological illustrations. The quality and reproduction of the figures are of the highest order and both author and publisher are to be congratulated on such a clear vivid presentation.