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.

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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.

The only British rival is the established atlas of Spillane and Spillane (2nd edn., Oxford University Press, 1982). This is a sophisticated work with a more historical bias, but better suited perhaps to the postgraduate. The choice is really a matter of personal taste. Parsons' book is guaranteed a warm welcome by undergraduates and postgraduates alike. Its high cost however, may daunt the private collector; but what a nice present from Consultant to his registrar. Or, do I mean *vice versa*?

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Diabetes Mellitus. Theory and Practice

Edited by MAX ELLENBERG and HAROLD RIFKIN. Pp. xx + 1105, illustrated. Medical Examination Publishing Company, New Hyde Park, New York, 1983. \$95.00.

My first reaction to this 57 chapter, 1,105 page book was that it is just another excessively long and expensive American textbook. However on closer examination it is clearly a marvellous reference book on every aspect of diabetes. It is not a book for the amateur and in general it would be difficult to sift simple and important principles of diabetic management from the vast quantity of information it contains. Yet as a source of reference it is invaluable, written as it is by many authors of international distinction. To the great credit of the editors it is well up to date with a considerable bibliography from 1980-1982. Many chapters are devoted to novel aspects of diabetes, from its aetiology, including descriptions of the insulin gene to new methods of insulin delivery; from detailed metabolic observations to diabetic complications including an entirely novel chapter describing development of foot evaluation and care. Illustrations are mediocre and insufficient in number and, most notably in the chapter on the eye, there are hardly any photographs of retinopathy. There are some lengthy and less fortunate sections where the relevance to diabetes is remote, such as the eight pages and 129 references on dental and oral aspects. A lot of space is wasted on excessive bibliography—lengthy in most chapters, with a maximum of over 500 references after one of them!

This is an important reference book on diabetes. It is essentially, as the editors state, a 'new book'. It will not be a great help to a district physician needing clear advice on routine care but it is essential to all those who need to immerse themselves in the vast and fascinating literature on diabetes.

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Laboratory Investigation of Endocrine Disorders

By MICHAEL R. WILLS and BILL HAVARD. 2nd edn. Pp. xiii + 111. Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1983. £5.50.

The first edition of this compact manual appeared in 1979 and provided a basic guide to available endocrine laboratory tests and their interpretation. It provided a convenient source of information both for the clinician working in endocrinology and the laboratory-based scientist. In this edition, the original text has been updated and extended to include a chapter dealing with disorders of calcium homeostasis with particular reference to hypercalcaemia and hypocalcaemia. A useful appendix has also been added on reference values.

The book forms a digest of the considerable personal experience of the authors in the clinical and laboratory investigation of patients with endocrine disorders. The protocols and tests described are all well established and non-controversial. It is a pity that in updating no mention has been made of the increasing use of free serum thyroxine in the investigation of thyroid function. The dimensions of the 2nd edition have been increased making it a little less convenient

for a white coat pocket where it is likely to be found rather than in the bookcase. In such a handbook, the ability to find information quickly is important and an index would have been useful. Practical information on a specific topic sometimes appears on different pages in the text. For example, a clinician wishing to find information on sample preparation for the estimation of plasma cortisol would turn to page 30 but would not learn that certain drugs interfere with the measurement until page 33. However, these are small criticisms of an excellent handbook.

Today, with the increasing number of tests available for the investigation of patients, it is important that appropriate tests are undertaken and equally important that the correct specimens are sent to the laboratory.

This little book will certainly earn its keep.

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Modern Aspects of Gold Therapy Rheumatology. An Annual Review. Vol. 8

Edited by M. SCHATTENKIRCHNER and W. MULLER. Pp. 229, illustrated. Karger, Basle, 1983. Sw. Fr. 130.00 \$78.00

Recent work on Auranofin, an oral gold compound, has stimulated renewed interest in gold therapy for rheumatic diseases. This volume is the proceedings of the 1982 international gold workshop in Munich. There are 13 papers on pharmacology and 14 on clinical experience with both parenteral and oral gold. Many of the contributors are leading investigators in rheumatology and, as expected, the overall standard of presentation is high.

The papers range from reviews on the measurement of gold levels in the body to the action of gold compounds on the immune response; from the place of parenteral gold therapy in rheumatoid arthritis to the measurement of the clinical efficacy of these agents. It is refreshing that undue emphasis is not given to clinical trials of Auranofin.

The mechanism by which gold compounds exert a therapeutic effect is unclear and the papers on the differing effects of oral and parenteral preparations on the inflammatory process, cellular and humoral responses are of particular interest. There are also two speculative papers concerning the effect of gold compounds on DNA metabolism.

Rheumatologists are beset by an ever increasing number of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, many of which are of a dubious pedigree and efficacy. It is widely held that parenteral gold compounds are of value in rheumatoid arthritis and the prospect of an effective oral agent is exciting.

This is a specialist volume which will be of interest primarily to clinical pharmacologists and rheumatologists. The text is amply referenced and can be recommended for a departmental library.

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The Nature of General Family Practice. 583 Clinical Vignettes in Family Medicine. An Alternative Approach to Syllabus Development

Edited by W. E. FABB and J. R. MARSHALL. Pp. xx + 660. MTP Press, Lancaster, Boston, The Hague, 1983. £19.95.

This rather novel book consists of a collection of almost 600 short case histories of patients who have presented to 60 general practitioners or family physicians in ten countries including Australia, Canada, South Africa and England.

The Australian editors are the Director and Assistant Director of Education, Family Medicine Programme at the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

The book is divided into two parts. The first contains a short history followed by four or five major questions requiring a broad