admirable manner how cast braces can be applied simply and easily. The excellent photographs must surely reduce the 'learning curve' time to a minimum. These show with a considerable clarity many of the fine points of detail although I suspect that most new cameras would still need a demonstration of some point, for example the siting of the metal knee hinges.

The authors' stated intent is to provide a practical guide, which they have done excellently. However, the very wealth of detail provided also makes it very clear that these methods are not for the occasional pundit, but rather a valuable method for use by an already experienced fracture team. The extra work involved in applying the braces will be rewarded by a reduction on some of the complications of joint immobility only if the long-standing principles of early fracture care are adhered to.

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Manual of Renal Disease, Colin B. Brown. Pp. iii + 227, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £7.95.

Each medical specialty has developed its own vocabulary and in none is this greater than nephrology. Dialysis, transplantation and intensive care have their own jargon or telegraphese which may add to their mystique but which newcomers might find off-putting and confusing. Colin Brown's brave attempt to produce a *Manual of Renal Disease* dispels some of these problems, but with use of the terms nephritis, acute nephritis and glomerulonephritis interchangeably, the distinction between the clinical syndrome (acute nephritis) and the glomerular pathology found on renal biopsy (glomerular nephritis; better termed glomerulonephropathy) remains confused.

The book reflects one man's experience of nephrology but in trying to be comprehensive yet concise, style and presentation suffer and repetition has been difficult to avoid. There is an excellent section on feeding, and the inclusion of nomograms, normal value and prescribing information together with detailed practical hints commend the book to the registrar new to a renal unit but who will have to work in out-patients and elsewhere in the hospital. Inclusion of line diagrams of glomerular ultrastructure are useful but are in the wrong chapter. The hormonal control of renal blood flow by prostaglandins, dopamine and the renin-angiotensin system and how this may be affected by salt, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and beta-blockers, is an important omission from the chapter on acute renal failure.

Despite these minor criticisms I learnt much from the book and will certainly keep it in the hospital rather than the library or bedroom.

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Principles and Practices of Geriatric Medicine, edited by M.S.J. Pathy. Pp. xi + 1323, illustrated. John Wiley, Chichester, New York, Brisbane, Toronto, Singapore, 1985. £62.50.

This is one of two comprehensive and authoritative textbooks published in the United Kingdom. Its scope is wide ranging from ageing in plants, through the management and treatment of diseases in the elderly, to the epidemiology and delivery of health care to the aged.

The authors are mainly from the United Kingdom, but there is a leavening from other parts of Europe and from North America. The editor has been imaginative and persuasive in recruiting authors from a wide range of disciplines, many of whom are internationally recognised experts in their topics. Skilful writing has meant that the text is lucid and informative with a uniformity of style and little overlap between chapters. The book is also splendidly illustrated with photographs, tables, maps, graphs and algorithms.

I was impressed by the range of topics. The core was concerned with the internal medicine of old age. However, the care of the elderly involves many other disciplines and there are concise and practical chapters on ophthalmology, hearing problems, skin disorders, gynaecology, and sexuality. Topics closely allied to geriatric medicine include psychiatry, orthopaedics and rehabilitation and there are particularly good sections on these.

There is a danger of this type of book being dominated by hospital practice, so that it was encouraging to see chapters dealing with various aspects of community care. In addition, the care of the elderly is put into a world context by a chapter on health care in the United Kingdom being supplemented by ones on health care in the United States, Japan and the developing world.

A common fault of books on geriatric medicine is that they repeat information available in more general textbooks. Most of the chapters in the current work avoid this hazard. Possible exceptions are those dealing with haematology and joint disease. These are excellent reviews, but stray too far into the realms of general medicine.

The book is an excellent review of the current state of the art in geriatric medicine and, even at \$62.50 can be recommended as an excellent text for trainees and specialists in this discipline. It also provides a window to the more general medical world on the tremendous strides that have been made in the care of the elderly over the last 25 years.

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Recent Advances in Clinical Neurology, No. 4, edited by W.B. Matthews and Gilbert H. Glaser. Pp. xi + 312, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1984. £25.00.

This latest volume of *Recent Advances in Clinical Neurology* contains thirteen reviews, each of about twenty pages, on a number of topics of current neurological interest.

Guilleminault and Mondini write clearly about the sleep disorders which have come into increasing prominence in the last decade, with the realisation that distinctive disorders of daytime arousal may result from intermittent nocturnal

obstruction of the upper airways. The submission of this chapter must have preceded the important observation by Parkes and his colleagues that all patients with true narcolepsy express the major histocompatibility complex antigen HLA DR2.

Other interesting chapters include a useful review of the pathophysiology of bacterial meningitis, and useful guidelines for treatment. Sir Roger Bannister summarises some of the principal observations of autonomic pathophysiology, the subject of a larger monograph edited by him two years ago. The different syndromes of progressive autonomic failure are clearly delineated.

John Newsom-Davis reviews some of the latest physiological and immunological work on myasthenic syndromes, and Professor Bryan Matthews outlines the difficulties of assessing the worth of different treatments proposed for multiple sclerosis.

It is, perhaps, invidious to single out these attractive chapters, as the whole volume is worthy of a leisurely read, and each chapter provides a useful update in areas of clinical interest to the practising neurologist. I strongly recommend the volume, and trust the series will continue at the same standard.

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