advice about a particular problem and he suggests that a good response is narrow and precise. With this in mind I looked forward to reading a book that addressed specific problems in general surgery. Instead I found yet another systematic approach only this time compressed into too small a space to be comprehensive. The book is small, to fit the pocket, and yet is spiral bound and therefore not very robust. The print is small and the tables and diagrams often complicated. The illustrative photographs, however, are very good, particularly the radiology.

The text is mostly clear and well written and the content is up to date, well argued and enjoyable reading. I enjoyed most of the sections and in particular the ones on breast and vascular disease but in both instances I was left wishing for more.

Dr Reinhold says in his preface 'Who needs another book about surgery?' I am sure there is a place for such a book but unfortunately this one falls between two stools, and it is not good value for money at £19.

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A Doctor in Saudi Arabia. G.E. Moloney. Pp. 365, illustrated. Regency Press (London & New York), London, 1985. £12.50.

Authors of articles and books about modern-day Saudi Arabia tend either to be distracted by the more sensationalist aspects of that developing country or to document simply the dry facts and figures which, although astonishing, do not give a satisfactory picture of Saudi society.

Professor Moloney has avoided these pitfalls in a most entertaining account of some of his experiences whilst working as Professor of Surgery at the University of Riyadh from 1977 to 1982. In addition he has provided a potted history of the country, a guide to cultural mores and short biographies of the kings following King Abdul Aziz, the founder of the kingdom.

The last section of the book is a potpourri of medical topics. Some of the diseases encountered in Saudi Arabia are mentioned, traditional forms of medical therapy, such as cauterization, are discussed and, finally, there are accounts of three field trips undertaken with students to different parts of the kingdom to study community health problems. This is the least satisfactory part of the book since there is too much medical detail for the lay reader but too little to be useful to the practising physician.

In one of the most fascinating sections Professor Moloney describes his travels, and attendant adventures, in many parts of the country. Such touristic glimpses of Saudi Arabia rarely find their way into print and form a valuable addition to the accounts of earlier travellers.

The book is lightly written in an almost conversational style which makes for easy reading but sometimes leads to a rather disjointed narrative. A keen clinical eye is cast on all events which are then conveyed to the reader with understanding, a lively sense of fun and not a little affection.

I believe the book will succeed best as an introduction to life in Saudi Arabia for the prospective worker in that country who will find it a useful prophylactic against inevitable culture shock.

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Hypoglycaemia in Infancy and Childhood. Albert Aynsley-Green and Gyula Soltész. Current Reviews in Paediatrics Series. Pp. vii + 165, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £18.00.

This book forms volume I of a new series of current reviews in paediatrics and covers a very important topic.

The first chapter describes the regulation of carbohydrate metabolism with the inclusion of fetal glucose homeostasis being particularly welcome. Subsequent chapters describe hypoglycaemia in the paediatric age group with emphasis on the mechanisms leading to hypoglycaemia. Neonatal hypoglycaemia and hyperinsulinism are comprehensively covered with clear discussion of areas of controversy. Hypoglycaemia due to inborn errors of metabolism is less well covered. Undue prominence is given to some extremely rare, although interesting, disorders, for example glycogen synthetase deficiency, whilst others are omitted, for example hereditary tyrosinaemia. Accelerated starvation syndrome and defects of fatty acid metabolism, which are being increasingly recognized as causes of hypoglycaemia, are clearly discussed.

The final chapter describes a practical, but thorough, approach to the diagnosis of the cause of hypoglycaemia in childhood. The references are comprehensive and the only criticism of the figures is the failure to use SI units throughout.

This volume is of interest to all paediatricians, especially those with an interest in neonatology, endocrinology or metabolic disease. It may be a little detailed for the MRCP candidate but gives welcome prominence to the importance of the basic sciences in paediatrics.

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Lymph Node Biopsy Interpretation. Edited by A.G. Stansfeld. Pp. v + 419, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £60.00.

The aim of this work is to assist general hospital histopathologists in the interpretation of lymph node biopsy specimens, and in this it is likely to succeed. The editor and

major author is one of the most experienced British lymphoma pathologists and a co-originator of the Kiel classification. The core of the book is a detailed, lucid and well illustrated exposition of non-Hodgkin's lymphomas, according to this classification (with synonyms referable to others), including clinical features, with separate chapters on Hodgkin's disease and peripheral T-cell lymphomas. Other chapters cover non-neoplastic disorders, immune deficiency diseases, histiocytic tumours and metastases in lymph nodes, as well as technical aspects of biopsy and processing. Dr Habeshaw's chapter on immunohistochemistry of lymphoid cells contains a great deal of information about marker antibodies and extends the scope of the book beyond its stated aim.

The text as a whole is well written, and readable and the illustrations, apart from a few low power photomicrographs, of good quality. One criticism is that the book, perhaps inevitably, is out of date with few references after 1983. A particular omission, in view of the now general employment of the technique with paraffin sections, is the use of immunohistochemistry in diagnosing undifferentiated metastatic tumours in lymph nodes, which receives only passing mention. This is a situation where immunohistochemistry is likely to be used as a major aid by pathologists who do not have frequent exposure to such problems. Nonetheless, I found this book to be valuable as an aid to the light microscopic diagnosis of difficult lymph node biopsies.

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Le Magnésium en Pratique Clinique. Jean Durlach. Pp. xxiii + 387, illustrated. Editions Médicales Internationales, Paris, 1985. FF 230.00.

Together with potassium, magnesium is the major intracellular cation and plays a pivotal role in many physiological processes. In his book *Le Magnésium en Pratique Clinique*, J. Durlach presents an extensive review of the currently available knowledge on the involvement of magnesium in the maintenance of body homeostasis both in normal and pathological conditions. In a first chapter the metabolism and physiological properties of magnesium are reviewed. The following 3 chapters deal in much detail with diseases, associated either with primary or secondary magnesium deficiency, or with a pathological accumulation of magnesium in the body. Finally, in the last chapter of the book therapeutic measures involving magnesium are discussed.

The book is primarily intended to be a reference work for clinicians in the various disciplines of internal medicine. Both the detailed table of contents and the index with many entries are useful in this respect. The vast list of 1415 references, updated to 1985, covers publications worldwide and is accompanied by an index of authors. The book thus provides a broad access to all available literature in this field and can

therefore be recommended also to all those, clinicians and researchers alike, with a special interest in magnesium.

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A Manual of English for the Overseas Doctor. Third edition. Joy Parkinson. Pp. xiii + 274. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £7.50.

It is often said of doctors that they do not communicate effectively with their patients. The ability to talk to patients in an understandable style is indisputably an important facility in the complete management of a patient. It is also most desirable that a doctor is able to communicate with his colleagues, both medical and paramedical. The failure of doctors to inform is not always due to an inability to express themselves in English but rather a result of not fully appreciating the relevance of appropriate communication. It is a common fault for patients to be discharged from hospital to the care of their general practitioners without adequate data being provided in the temporary discharge notes and for the full summary to be sent months later! The NHS still depends heavily on overseas doctors for delivery of health care. In specialties such as psychiatry and care of the elderly, where the ability to communicate clearly in English is of the greatest importance, the NHS is largely dependent on overseas doctors in the 'training grades'. It is therefore appropriate that a manual of English for the overseas doctors is available.

Joy Parkinson is to be congratulated on being able to cover a wide range of disease conditions to demonstrate the use of colloquial English. The chapters on medical abbreviations, descriptive language and phrasal verbs are most helpful.

The importance of completing application forms in type rather than in long-hand could have been emphasized. Overseas doctors fail to seek advice from more senior colleagues before completing an application for a hospital post.

The introductory chapters on the structure of the NHS, organization within a hospital and postgraduate medical training were most useful. However, I felt it could have been emphasized that training posts in some specialties were difficult to obtain and as a consequence many overseas doctors found themselves in specialties not related to the type of examination they had intended to take. The new Home Office rules pertaining to overseas doctors could be usefully added to the next addition.

My criticisms relate more to the degree of emphasis rather than content. I would recommend this book to a doctor before he leaves his country to practise in the United Kingdom.

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