Advanced Geriatric Medicine 5, edited by R.C. Tallis and F.I. Caird. Pp. vi + 120, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £25.00.

This is an interesting selection of essays on a number of subjects which are of interest to physicians working with the elderly. I found it pleasant, readable and informative but lacking in any theme. The essays on the mechanism of hypertension in the elderly by John Swales, on the epidemiology of hypertension in old age by Bill MacLennan and on the treatment of hypertension in the elderly by Bryan Williams are excellent, authoritative and useful.

Keith Andrews' chapter on the physical treatment of parkinsonism and Francis Caird's chapter on occupational and speech therapy in Parkinson's disease are chapters which are useful for those training to specialize in medicine in the elderly and for their multidisciplinary teams. I am glad that Francis Caird finds occupational therapy of more value than Brian Gibberd did in his paper published a few years ago. I learnt a new concept, that of prosody, from this chapter.

Dr Turnbull reviews the drug treatment of Parkinson's disease. I like the classification of Tony Broe that he uses. However, I am not sure that I would use nomifensine for the depressed parkinsonian patient. Dr Playfers' chapter on the pathophysiology of parkinsonism is useful for those wishing to review the literature on advances. I am not sure if the essays on audit and use of microcomputers will bring in many converts to these activities. The chapter on dysrhythmias is useful and important. The Smith Kline and French lecture on evolutionary aspects of ageing repeats the known facts in an interesting way. Overall I think this is a useful volume for the shelves of medical libraries which want to have a comprehensive section on the elderly.

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Annual Review of Medicine: Selected Topics in the Clinical Sciences. Vol. 37, 1986, edited by William P. Creger, Cecil H. Coggins and E. William Hancock. Pp. xi + 465, illustrated. Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, California, 1986. \$31.00 (USA), \$34.00 (elsewhere). Prices include postage and handling.

Altogether there are 37 contributions to this medical pot-pourri and one must sympathize with the editors in their gruelling task of selecting the appropriate ingredients. Presumably their choice is influenced by the contents of the editorial columns of our major journals since many of the topics which have been ricocheting back and forth in recent months re-appear in the Annual Review. In spite of an excess of chapters on laboratory haematology the editors have, in the main, produced an erudite collection of articles that will be mandatory reading for academic physicians wishing to keep their cutting edges well honed. Of particular value are those on atrial natriuretic peptide, T cell sub-sets, gastric mucosal injury and immuno-toxin therapy. A few unexpected, but welcome articles, such as 'Involuntary Treatment in Medicine' and 'The Role of the Spleen in Infection' force their way in and improve the mix.

This is a reasonably priced and handsome book but one has to ask the question 'Will it survive?' In a straw poll of my physician colleagues none bought or read review books of this kind, preferring to use the more succinct 'updates' in their specialist journals. Perhaps we have too many books but too few readers.

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Annual Review of Nutrition. Vol. 6, 1986, edited by Robert E. Olsen, Ernest Beutler and Harry P. Broquist. Pp. xii + 649, illustrated. Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, California, 1986. \$31.00 (USA), \$34.00 (elsewhere). Prices include postage and handling.

Doctors with an interest in clinical nutrition have a formidable task in trying to keep abreast of the huge and diverse literature. This volume will prove a great help in this respect. The theme is set by a scholarly and stimulating introduction by Dr Donald Munro in which he rightly emphasizes the importance of basic science and the cross fertilization of ideas between different disciplines. The book not only contains reviews which are of immediate interest to the clinician, such as those on nutrition and infection, calcium and hypertension, and metabolic adaptations, but also important reviews on psychological and cultural aspects of appetite and behaviour which are fundamental to our understanding of such conditions as anorexia nervosa and obesity. Some chapters are of limited interest to the clinician, but others, such as that on the gastrointestinal microflora, provide an excellent review of the comparative biology of man and other animals. Basic scientific chapters, such as that on the biochemistry of iron metabolism, are fundamental to our understanding of clinical problems. No medical library should be without this annual review series and it has a very useful place on the shelves of all those interested in nutrition whether clinician or basic scientist.

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Athletic Training and Sports Medicine, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Pp. viii + 602, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1984. £40.00.

This large handsome book has over 80 contributors and seven editors. It is lavishly illustrated with line drawings and photographs including some X-rays. There are a few colour plates at the end of the book illustrating skin conditions.

The book is very much geared to the American sporting and medical scene and although it is fairly comprehensive it appears to be aimed principally at the 'Team Trainer' rather than the doctor with an interest in sports medicine. This is demonstrated by the finding that a large part of the book covers the anatomy and physiology of the body, American Sporting 'Armour' – protective devices for American footballers, etc, as well as taping and bandaging procedures. The