book will not be of any value afterwards. Part I M.R.C.P. students would also do well to spend a few hours perusing the contents of this book.

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Pancreatic Cancer

A Series of Workshops on the Biology of Human Cancer, Report No. 12. UICC Technical Report Series, vol. 57. Edited by ISIDORE COHN JR and PAUL R. HASTINGS. Pp. 142, illustrated. International Union against Cancer, Geneva, 1981. Sw. fr. 20.

This is the résumé of a workshop on pancreatic cancer sponsored by the International Union Against Cancer, bringing together a small group of international experts. The scene is set with a chapter on epidemiology, reflecting the increasing mortality in advanced countries, and the paucity of our understanding of the reasons for this epidemic. This is followed by a review of the pathology of non-endocrine tumours, based on a personal series of 645 patients. The authors emphasize the important prognostic differences between different cell types and sites of origin. The chapter on endocrine tumours is brief and authoritative but does not cover diagnostic aspects in detail.

Chapters on carcinogenesis, animal models, the biology of tumour cells, and the effects of diet on the exocrine pancreas give a broad over-view of present experimental research, without providing much hope for a sudden breakthrough in understanding. Likewise, the survey of pancreatic tumour markers might be depressing if the goals were not so tantalizing.

For the clinician, the chapter on prognosis and the results of treatment must be profoundly depressing—but leads reasonably into some guidelines for 'better co-ordinated, more productive and co-operative research effort on an international basis'.

This is a short and valuable source document for all those interested in the subject of pancreatic cancer. Individual contributions are well written and edited, and are accompanied by more than 400 references.

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Problems in Geriatric Medicine

By ANTHONY MARTIN. Problems in Practice Series. Pp. 195, illustrated. MTP Press, Lancaster, 1981. £7.95.

There is now a significant range of texts on geriatric medicine, from books for undergraduates through to comprehensive tomes; this text book is one of a series designed to help general practitioners and is attractively produced. The vascular system is obviously of interest to the author and the relevant chapters are capably presented; the chapter on incontinence by Roger Briggs is also well done. The question of balance in such a wide ranging book, however, has clearly caused problems; there are nine pages on heart block and two on diabetes; Lenègre's syndrome gets a mention while the clinical features of depression get sixteen

lines. There are contradictions in the text (between 4 and 6% of the population over the age of 65 years suffer from definite organic psychiatric disorders in one paragraph while the next paragraph describes dementia affecting 10% of the over 65s; nitrazepam as a hypnotic is to be avoided in one chapter but may be used in another and 'incidence' is confused with 'prevalence'. There are some factual errors, such as in the biochemistry of calcium metabolism.

In the use of drugs a dose of 62.5 mg of digoxin will not be suitable for all old patients, the dose of vitamin D recommended as a starting dose for all patients in the treatment of osteomalacia (1.25 mg) can be toxic and is 100 times more than others would use, the long-acting sulphonylurea chlorpropamide is avoided by many geriatricians while carbimazole still has a place in the control of thyrotoxicosis and few would rely on propranolol and radioiodine. There is an index but no references are given. The general practitioner may well find one of the other text books on geriatric medicine more reliable.

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Scientific Foundations of Surgery

Edited by JAMES KYLE and JAMES D. HARDY. 3rd Edn. Pp. xiv+712, illustrated. William Heinemann Medical Books, London, 1981. £48.00.

In 1967, Professor Charles Wells and James Kyle published an exciting experiment—a text book produced by surgeons, physicians, pathologists and anatomists, which described the fundamental principles upon which clinical practice depends. This was the first of the 'Scientific Foundations' series, which has now spread to some fifteen specialities. In this third edition, Professor Wells has now retired as co-editor and has been replaced by Dr James Hardy, currently the President of the American College of Surgeons. The team of eighty-four other contributors is drawn from the U.S.A. Canada, South Africa, and Australia, as well as the United Kingdom and includes many names of international authority.

After preliminary chapters on the cell, genetics and congenital abnormalities, there is a detailed section on immunology and transplantation. Following this, each of the major systems is considered in turn. There are then sections on inflammation, wound healing, cancer, microbiology, sterilization and hospital infection. A particularly welcome chapter is on parasitology for surgeons which will be of interest to surgeons working in tropical countries and those who may be confronted by patients recently returned from overseas.

The text reads well, the illustrations and tables are copious and clear and the bibliography both up to date and informative.

This third edition maintains the high traditions of its predecessors and, like them, will prove valuable both to surgeons in training, who are studying for their Primary F.R.C.S., and to more senior men who require an up to date source-book on the scientific foundations of their speciality.

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