

answer each batch using the relevant technique. I am uncertain whether the change from type to type through each section is altogether satisfactory, but it does provide experience in different methods which would stimulate mental agility.

The book is divided into 7 sections with the correct answers grouped on the last few pages. The first section embraces Autonomic Pharmacology, including skeletal muscle, local anaesthetics and anti-arrhythmics. The second includes digoxin and diuretics with endocrine pharmacology. The next covers reproductive pharmacology while the fourth deals with central nervous system pharmacology. The fifth section involves cancer chemotherapy and human anti-parasitic chemotherapy (a rather neglected field). The sixth is on drug disposition and metabolism. The last section is devoted to applied pharmacology. While most MCQs are conventional in presentation, graphs, diagrams and problems are occasionally used. Some questions in all sections are easy to answer while others provide severe tests and some are very difficult and require a highly specialized knowledge, but the mix is about right so that the student may see the panorama of MCQs for which he may be at risk.

If used systematically, the student should be able to practise answering MCQs and to monitor his knowledge of pharmacology and be able to pick out areas of weakness which could be corrected by consulting a text book.

For the university teacher this book provides a large and diverse collection of MCQs which can be used as a source of MCQs and it also engenders stimulation and inspiration leading to the construction of new MCQs for local examination purposes.

At £3.50, this book represents a 'good buy' alike for medical and dental students and for academic staff interested in medical pharmacology.

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An Outline of Energy Metabolism in Man

By GORDON L. ATKINS. Pp. 96, illustrated. William Heinemann Medical Books, London, 1981. £4.95.

The reviewer approached this little book with considerable reserve. Intermediate metabolism is, to coin a phrase, a well ploughed field. Complex metabolic charts have become major allergens to anybody working in or on the fringes of biochemical medicine. Lecture notes rarely if ever transform into readable books. "Energy metabolism" sounds slightly pretentious. None of these forebodings were in fact, justified.

This is an excellent summary of current teaching of human biochemistry—not perhaps bedside reading but clear, well balanced and exceptionally well focused on essentials. The last attribute is particularly rare. The charts are built up gradually and logically instead of assualting the eye and mind with a jumble of arrows, crosses, circles, dotted lines, bold arcs and minuscule print. The fact that the origin of the book was a series of lecture notes (for anaesthetists working for the FFA RCS Part I—most of them, one imagines, aglow at the prospect of forgetting all about energy metabolism as soon as the exam is over) does, of course, show: the tone is brisk and dogmatic and conveys little of the uncertainty that still surrounds much of the subject. But there is room for such an approach. And the title, if not perhaps quite accurate, is justified by the author's interpretation of biochemical reactions and pathways in terms of energy turnover. This is a real advance over most current teaching texts and has a welcome unifying effect. It might, who knows, even spark off

real interest in some of his non-biochemical readers to whom the subject might otherwise seem to have been designed for the sole purpose of obstructing their clinical progress to the stars. The book has been pleasingly produced and printed and it is by no means unreasonably priced. A useful publication.

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Problems in Respiratory Medicine

By PAUL FORGACS. Problems in Practice Series. Pp. 158, illustrated. M.T.P. Press, Lancaster, 1981. £7.95.

Dr Paul Forgacs' book *Problems in Respiratory Medicine* proves a worthy addition to other books published in this series, relating to various specialities. The author has already established a reputation for himself as one who has clarified the symptoms and clinical signs in chest medicine that we may now all speak a common language when we refer to crackles and wheezes.

The book deals mainly with the common chest diseases and mentions the more obscure only when dealing with differential diagnoses. I found the marginal headings very helpful, as I think they would be to GPs when scanning the pages.

The detail is adequate and the straightforward prose makes the book eminently readable. The diagrams are simple and the tables uncluttered with detail.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book not only for GPs but as an introduction to chest medicine for medical students.

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Respiratory Medicine

By DAVID C. FLENLEY. Baillière's Concise Medical Textbooks. Pp. 263, illustrated. Baillière Tindall, London, 1981. £6.50 (paperback).

One can find few faults with this excellent book, except, perhaps, to regret that Professor Flenley did not write it earlier. It admirably fulfils its objective of providing a short text book of respiratory medicine; bridging the gap between the respiratory chapters of general medical text books and the more comprehensive specialist works. In places, this book seems to provide rather more information than the specialist publications, particularly with respect to practical details of treatment. Although written in a condensed style, it is very readable and not without the occasional dash of humour.

The bulk of a volume of this size must, of course, be devoted to the important, common conditions, such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis and bronchial carcinoma. Accounts of these subjects are very up to date. The author confesses to a dogmatic approach but, nevertheless, succeeds in giving a balanced view of current research and opinion. The diversity of the literature on the immunology and pathogenesis of conditions such as emphysema is condensed into very clear accounts, sometimes supported by useful diagrams. The book is liberally illustrated with line drawings, many of them devoted to interpretation of chest X-rays. There are also a few diagrams of CT scans of the thorax, which are now increasingly used in chest medicine.

As one would expect from this author, the physiological background is very adequately covered in the opening chapters. I was pleased to see that a significant amount of space was given to symptoms and interpretation of physical signs. This seems most appropriate in view of the frequent difficulty which undergraduate and postgraduate students alike

display in examining the thorax. In conclusion, this book is a 'must' for MRCP candidates and for the general physician seeking a brief update on respiratory medicine.

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The Staphylococci, Proceedings of the Alexander Ogston Centennial Conference

Edited by ALEXANDER MACDONALD and GEORGE SMITH.
Pp. ix+288, illustrated. Aberdeen University Press,
Aberdeen, 1981. £20.00.

It is 100 years since Alexander Ogston described the *Staphylococcus*: a centenary celebrated at Aberdeen University, with a symposium. Attempts to produce books from conference proceedings often produce a somewhat disjointed collection of limited aspects of a subject, with a marked variation in standard between papers. This book is notable for not falling into such a category. The authors of the twenty chapters have been carefully selected, and give a concise account of their particular interest.

The book may be divided into a number of linked sections. The first 2 chapters outline the historical interrelationships between Ogston, the developing science of bacteriology, and his early work on the *Staphylococcus*. Then follows an interesting interlude on Ogston's experiences in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

From the historical aspects, we move to the difficulties of the taxonomy of the staphylococci, admirably described and discussed by Dr Hill. This chapter is followed by a series of papers encompassing host parasite relationships, immunology and pathogenicity. From these papers, and a clinical chapter demonstrating the versatility of the staphylococcus, the reader comes to appreciate how much still remains unknown about this ubiquitous organism, in spite of the amount of fruitful research that has been done.

The epidemiology of staphylococcal infections, particularly with regard to the classical hospital epidemics, and the carrier state is covered in a series of chapters by among others, Prof. Shooter, Dr Parker, and Dr Lidwell—all experts in this field. A chapter on infection in the tropics underlines the versatility and mystery of this organism. Prof. Lambert describes the antimicrobial sensitivity of the staphylococcus, concentrating on the treatment of severe infections. Finally, a masterly summary of the history and bacteriology of the organism is given by Sir R. E. O. Williams

The appendix is a translation of Ogston's original presentation, and if read first, sets the scene for the rest of the

book. More than a centennial tribute, this book is useful as a reference source. What a pity it was not possible to provide an index to allow easier access to the wealth of information.

One further minor criticism is the cost—twenty pounds for 288 pages must restrict the market to department libraries, where it will be a worthwhile addition.

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Suppressor Cells in Human Disease

Edited by JAMES S. GOODWIN. Immunology Series vol. 14.
Pp. x+363, illustrated. Marcel Dekker, New York, 1981.
Sw.Fr 118.00.

Immunology is such a rapidly growing subject that it is difficult for even the specialist to keep up to date. There is therefore a need for review style articles and books dealing with particular areas and this book is designed to fulfil such a need. Problems arise, however, when there is a time-lag between writing the chapters (especially true for a multi-author book) and publication, for the concepts may well be out of date. This book would have been a good one two years ago but so much new information has accumulated in this time that, as published now, the book is sadly deficient. The first few chapters cover the basic areas with regard to suppression, i.e. macrophage interaction, prostaglandin and cyclic AMP regulation and HLA-D locus restriction. The remaining chapters deal with suppressor cells—lack or overactivity in diseases such as autoimmunity, immunodeficiency and cancer.

The book was written at the time that monoclonal antisera recognizing T cell subsets in man had just been described. There is now a wealth of literature on these T cell subpopulations in different diseases. Absent too are the new experiments on helper and suppressor factors, on T cell lines producing suppressor factors and whether major histocompatibility antigens restrict the function of these 'lymphokines'.

I sympathize with the authors—it was courageous to attempt to put together such a book. It is still valuable reading for the general physician and immunologist not working in the field since good and up-to-date reviews are not published frequently.

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