Books received

- Annual Review of Genetics*, Vol. 17, 1983. Edited by HERSCHEL L. ROMAN, ALLAN CAMPBELL and LAURENCE M. SANDLER. Pp. viii+537, illustrated. Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, California, 1983. \$27.00 (U.S.A.), \$30.00 (elsewhere). Prices include postage and handling.
- Case Presentations in Renal Medicine*. By R. A. COWARD, C. D. SHORT and N. P. MALLICK. Pp. xiv+172, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1983. £5.95
- Emergencies in Medicine*. Edited by ALISTAIR D. BEATTIE and JOHN T. IRELAND. Pp. 248, illustrated. Pitman, London, 1984. £16.00.
- Endocrine Diagnosis: Clinical and Laboratory Approach*. Edited by WILLIAM F. STRECK and DEAN H. LOCKWOOD. Pp. xii+330, illustrated. Little, Brown, Boston, Toronto, 1983. £19.80.
- Introductory Neurology*. By JAMES G. MCLEOD and JAMES W. LANCE. Pp. vii+276, illustrated. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Melbourne, Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Boston, Palo Alto, 1983. £9.80.

- Lecture Notes on the Infectious Diseases*. By BIBHAT K. MANDAL and RICHARD T. MAYON-WHITE. 4th edn. Pp. viii+272, illustrated. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Boston, Melbourne, 1984. £6.50.
- Managing Low Back Pain*. Edited by W. H. KIRKALDY-WILLIS. Pp. xii+260, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1983. £32.00.
- Principles of Paediatric Pharmacology*. By GEORGE M. MAXWELL. Pp. 407, illustrated. Croom Helm, London, Sydney, Oxford, University Press, New York, 1984. £22.50.
- Recent Advances in Histopathology. No. 12* Edited by PETER ANTHONY and RODERICK N. M. MACSWEEN. Pp. 293, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1984. £18.00.
- Textbook of Pulmonary Diseases*. Third Edition Edited by GERALD L. BAUM and EMANUEL WOLINSKY. 3rd edn. Pp. xii+1366, illustrated. Little, Brown, Boston, Toronto, 1983. £60.00.

Book reviews

A Clinical Approach to Progress in Infectious Diseases

Edited by W. BRUMFITT and J. M. T. HAMILTON-MILLER. Pp. xii+163, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, Tokyo, 1983. £12.50.

The title of this book could be misleading but its contents are not. It contains the proceedings of a 1-day meeting held at the Royal Free Hospital in London in 1983 in honour of Dame Sheila Sherlock prior to her retirement from the Chair of Medicine at that hospital.

There are eight contributors including Dame Sheila who gives a masterly review of the prevention and treatment of hepatitis type B. This is followed by a paper on the role of the liver in the handling of antibiotics and another on the treatment of biliary tract infection. Professor Milton Salton from the Department of Microbiology of the New York University School of Medicine gives a most interesting account of the structure and function of mammalian and microbial cell membranes with particular reference to understanding of infectious disease and the strategy of antimicrobial chemotherapy. Kass's essay entitled 'Should bacteruria be treated?' is written in his usual provocative style. The remaining three contributors are on R factors in animals, infective granulomas and the diagnosis and treatment of respiratory tract infections.

The essays in this book are well written and informative. The Editors are to be congratulated on producing it within 6 months of the meeting at which the papers were read.

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Critical Care of the Obstetric Patient

Edited by RICHARD L. BERKOWITZ. Pp. xiv+561, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London and Melbourne, 1983. £45.00.

This book is primarily about maternal intensive care in acute obstetric catastrophies, and acute illness such as asthma which may

affect pregnant women. It is written by a team of authors, most of whom come from Mount Sinai Hospital New York, and all of them come from the eastern United States. Inevitably, suggested therapy is biased towards American practice. For example, the drug of first choice that is cited for acute asthma is isoetharine (Numotac), a beta₂ agonist that is very little used in the United Kingdom. But the subject matter is very widely covered in 561 expensive pages. There are chapters on specific problems such as sepsis, blood volume replacement and acute hypertensive emergencies, and also on specific techniques such as the use of the Swan Ganz catheter. I was concerned that venous thromboembolism, the leading cause of maternal mortality in the United Kingdom, is only mentioned within a chapter on respiratory disease in pregnancy.

Because some of the writing is so non-committal, I wonder just how much experience some of the authors have in the topics of which they have written. But perhaps the intensity of American litigation makes authors too nervous to be dogmatic. I suspect that the book had a long gestation period, because some recent references are missing.

In conclusion, this is an essential book for the departmental libraries. It cannot be recommended sufficiently for individual purchasers to justify the very high price.

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Current Therapy in Infectious Disease, 1983-1984

By EDWARD H. KASS and RICHARD PLATT. Current Therapy Series. Pp. xvi+296, illustrated. B. C. Decker, Philadelphia, Toronto, V. Mosby, Saint Louis, Toronto, London, 1983. £35.20.

The therapy of infectious disease is becoming increasingly complex as a result of the discovery of hitherto unrecognised infections plus the constant flow of new antimicrobial agents. In few, if any, fields