clubs, private discussions and administrative pressures are from economic necessity pressuring hospital doctors. Diagnostic restraint has for some centres in the N.H.S. become a means of survival. This is of course the exact opposite for those institutions operating on the basis of a fee for service.

It is therefore not surprising, within this framework, that the advice given is comprehensive rather than particular, all encompassing without emphasizing the specific. The radiology is however, excellent with a few exceptions, no doubt dependent on the book being published before the evidence for digital subtraction angiography, duplex ultrasonography or impedance phlebography was available to the author.

In many ways the information is for radiologists, extremely valuable and succinct but presents the clinician with too much detail and too little direction. The opening chapter on basic radiology, particularly on assessing 'efficiency' is particularly good but these principles have not been applied systematically.

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Recent Advances in Medicine. No. 19, edited by A.M. Dawson, Nigel D. Compston, G.M. Besser. Pp.vii + 341, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1984. £15.00.

The latest edition of this long running series has again been successful in reviewing a wide range of topics of interest for the aspiring or established general physician. The impact of an ageing population is represented by a chapter on dementia which concisely and clearly reviews the possible pathogenesis and therapeutic options for this increasing problem. Chapters on alcoholic liver disease, asthma and drug dependence will update the busy physician seeing these problems on the general medical ward. The impact of modern technology is represented by chapters on nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) and new electrical therapies for tachycardia control. Imaging is an exciting growth area in medicine and the future role for NMR alongside other imaging methods is still to be defined. Advances in basic science are now being utilized to great effect in medical research and this is reflected by chapters on the haemoglobinopathies and on hepatitis B virus infection. I am certain that future editions will continue to reflect the increasing role of molecular biology in medical research. Chapters on pain relief, medical management of pituitary tumours and antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral chemotherapy are good reviews of the therapeutic possibilities for the general physician.

Overall, I enjoyed reading this book and hope that future editions will continue to help me cope with the increasing specialization within medicine.

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