I believe that the book succeeds admirably in what I presume to be the author's main aims viz. educating the patient without giving too many hostages to fortune and dispelling such mystique as cosmetic surgery retains and on which the 'cowboys' thrive.

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This is a large undertaking of considerable scope which is concerned, in the Editor's words, with all the important threats to health in warm climate countries. It is written by a large international team of authors. The book is not a straightforward account of the medical aspects of a large number of disease states but rather approaches the subject from the point of view of the community physician or district medical officer. The accent is on epidemiology, assignment of priorities, investigation and control. The opening chapters are concerned with the principles of epidemiology, control and investigation of disease. These are followed by sections dealing with diseases spread via air, food and water, contagion and animal or insect vectors. Zoonoses and some non-infectious diseases such as malignancy in the tropics are also dealt with. Finally the book ends with sections on a miscellany of subjects ranging from population dynamics and child growth to diseases of nomadic peoples.

As with all multi-author works there is considerable variation in the approach adopted in each chapter. Most try to compare problems presented by the disease or diseases under consideration in different geographic areas. Some have adopted a historical approach and, for instance, the chapter on smallpox eradication as a lesson in the control of an infectious process is of particular interest. In the earlier sections considerable attention is paid to the approaches to the investigation of different diseases in communities. It would have been useful to see this developed in some subsequent sections as certain aspects such as the detection of some infections in large numbers of people can present considerable problems. For instance the chapter on sexually transmitted diseases could be usefully expanded - particularly with the advent of AIDS.

Generally this is a very readable and informative book. The authors must be congratulated on not allowing themselves to be side-tracked by hobby horses, but have produced a very uniform account which provides a comprehensive view of disease. It is suitable for the use of doctors and other health workers with an interest in disease in the developing world as well as community physicians generally. The cost of £26 is reasonable considering the length, 767 pages, although it may limit its sales in some areas of need.

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This is the first of a series of books by Sir John Dacie on haemolytic anaemias which update the earlier edition now 25 years old. It has been splendidly produced by Churchill-Livingstone. This volume covers a general approach to haemolytic anaemias, hereditary spherocytosis and elliptocytosis, other less common RBC shape defects, and the inherited enzyme deficiencies of red cells. As always the black and white photomicrographs of peripheral blood films are outstanding in their clarity. The text is in the style that we have become accustomed to in previous editions. There is a full account of the published literature on each topic accompanied by the author's critical assessment. There is no need to go to the library to check on any detail of these disorders. It is all here in this book. The structure of the red cell membrane is central to many of the disorders described in this book.

If one dare offer any criticism of a text by Sir John Dacie on his favourite subject it is that he has elected to deal in a somewhat perfunctory way with the structure of the normal red cell membrane and hence the data on possible membrane defects in spherocytosis and elliptocytosis, put in small print, are less easy to follow than they might have been.

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Cast bracing or fracture bracing is, without doubt, not as widely used as it could be, partly because fracture clinics are set up to use Plaster of Paris which is cheap and thought to be easy to use, but also because fracture bracing is still surrounded by an air of mystery and seen as the domain of enthusiasts.

This volume sets out to resolve some of that mystery by providing practical detail of materials and methods. This it does very well, although I think it is a little short on the explanation and theory. It is no surprise to learn that the Egyptian Fifth Dynasty had discovered lateral splintage, although I would be surprised if they had understood the concepts of mobile joint above and below the site of the fracture.

The authors are fair in their assessment of the use of the method, making it quite clear that they believe it to be the second stage of arrangement and to provide reduction in the disability associated with prolonged immobilisation, rather than to be used for every situation. I think more could have been made of the recent orthopaedic literature to provide encouragement to use the method.

I believe the main value of this book is in the wealth of practical detail which it provides. The indications for the use of the method are briefly outlined in the second chapter and the remaining chapters devoted to a more detailed account of the practical application of the braces. They show in an