

systems and intra-ocular lenses have led to a revolution in the methods of cataract extraction.

Most young ophthalmologists will learn the techniques of cataract extraction by direct example from their senior colleagues. Thus, it is most timely that an introductory manual should be available at the start of training.

The book is divided into more or less equal sections on intra-capsular and extra-capsular extraction, lensectomy, intra-ocular lens implantation and complications.

There are as many ways of doing cataract extraction as there are surgeons but the authors present balanced and consensus techniques, which can easily be adapted and modified to suit personal idiosyncrasy.

As the book is a practical manual, greater detail could have been included in describing intra- and extra-capsular extraction, particularly as the section on complications is the largest in the book and is well covered in other texts.

The book is excellently produced with a generous allowance of colour photographs and line drawings, which are carefully placed next to the relevant text.

The price is quite high but none the less this is a good investment for anyone starting their surgical career or changing their techniques.

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Clinical Nutrition for Nurses, Dietitians and Other Health Care Professionals, John W.T. Dickerson and Elizabeth M. Booth. Pp. xiii + 270, illustrated. Faber, London, Boston, 1985. £8.50.

This book sets out to provide practical information for nurses, dietitians and others concerned with nutrition. Although the style is, in places, somewhat turgid, the text is easy to read thanks to the general lay-out and numerous tables. A feature is the list of references given at the end of each chapter. Possibly the most useful sections are those general chapters with which the book begins and ends. These cover such topics as recommended allowances, growth and body composition, unusual diets and drug/food interactions. The rest of the chapters cover the nutritional requirements of patients arranged in a systematic way. The medical description of the various diseases is inevitably brief, and this may partly explain the inaccuracies and ambiguities in the text. These are particularly marked with regard to drug therapy though sometimes the references are of greater historic interest than practical value, e.g., the chapter devoted to drug/food interactions fails to mention rifampicin. Elsewhere the emphasis given to practical nutritional aspects of some conditions such as gluten enteropathy seems to be unbalanced. The chapter entitled 'Obesity and Anorexia Nervosa' dismisses the latter as a psychiatric problem.

Possibly a clinical textbook of this nature should have at least one author actively involved in patient care but it may be that the greatest hazard that books of this nature face is the risk that they aim at such a wide and diverse public that they fail to satisfy the specific needs of any one section.

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Dietary Fibre Perspectives: Reviews and Bibliography 1, edited by Anthony R. Leeds; Bibliographical Editor Alison Avenell. Pp. vi + 358. John Libbey, London, Paris, 1985. £24.00, US\$42.00, FF310.00.

Despite the topical nature of dietary fibre it is doubtful whether the publication of this book is justified. It is erroneously stated in the foreword that 'it consists largely of reviews', but these comprise only 105 pages. The bulk of the book consists of two bibliographies; the first to the year 1977 has already been published in 1979 and the second covers only 1978–1982 so it is by no means up to date. Furthermore, with the ready availability of retrieval systems serious workers can easily obtain access to the world literature on the subject themselves. The reviews cover the important aspects of dietary fibre – the large gut, blood lipids, gallstones, diabetes mellitus, obesity, weight reduction, mineral absorption, and food products – but here again, similar reviews are continuously appearing in the literature and although their presence together is a considerable convenience it hardly warrants the effort and expense of a new book.

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Dietary Treatment and Prevention of Obesity. A Satellite Symposium, 4th International Congress on Obesity, New York, October 2–4, 1983, edited by Reva T. Frankle, Johanna Dwyer, Lenora Moragne and Anita Owen. International Obesity Monograph Series. Pp. x + 214, illustrated. John Libbey, London, 1985. £17.50, US\$30, FF325.

This monograph is based on papers presented at a Satellite Symposium and consists of 22 short chapters. The monograph is subdivided into 4 major sections. The first section discusses the role of diet, appetite, exercise and behavioural modification. The second section is concerned with current research on the aetiology of obesity. The third section discusses prevention and risk factors such as coronary heart disease, hypertension, cancer and diabetes mellitus. The final section discusses obesity in pregnancy and in children and the dietary treatment of anorexia nervosa. Overall I found little to commend for most chapters are too short to do justice to any topic. Typical examples are the chapters on adipose tissue which includes some discussion on brown fat and on hypertension in obesity. Nevertheless there are some interesting chapters. Xavier P. Sunyer discusses new work on the important question whether energy output regulates energy intake. A short chapter questions the value of behavioural therapy and another provides a balanced view on the role of exercise. Most chapters, however, present little that is new and one might also wonder whether a chapter on the treatment of anorexia nervosa should be included in a monograph on obesity. Omissions are obvious. For instance there is little in depth on liquid low calorie diets, on appetite suppressants, thermogenic drugs and on international schemes designed to prevent obesity by altering the nutrition of nations. Considering that this was a satellite symposium to an international meeting it is disappointing to note that only 3

out of the 29 authors come from without Canada and USA. This probably explains the orientation of this monograph which would have been greatly improved by a more international discussion.

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Disorders of Fluid and Electrolyte Balance: Diagnosis and Management, edited by Jules B. Puschett and Arthur Greenberg. Pp. xii + 259, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1985. £21.50.

The thirteen contributors to this book are from the University of Pittsburgh medical school, mainly the renal electrolyte division. They cover the expected topics including acid-base and calcium, magnesium and phosphate but also urate metabolism, diagnosis in renal disease, dialysis and drug use in renal failure so that much information is provided which most readers would normally seek in a nephrology text. This space would have been better given to sections devoted to the disturbances occurring for example in heart failure, hepatic cirrhosis and vomiting, information on which is scattered in the book and occasionally duplicated or incomplete. Each contribution is good in itself but the editing should have been more purposeful.

In the individual chapters I particularly enjoyed the section on diuretic use and the attempt most contributors made to clarify the many causes of each disturbance on physiological lines. It would have been helpful if the lists had indicated which were more common. The book is strong on pathophysiology as would be expected in a transatlantic text. The use of mathematical formulae to calculate fluid and electrolyte deficiencies will be less familiar in this country and they should be understood, even if incorporated into practice with caution. In some sections the route to diagnosis might have been more clearly set out. On the other hand management is dealt with in very useful detail. Failure to emphasize the need for chloride in the correction of hypokalaemic metabolic alkalosis is one exception.

The book is well worth reading although it cannot be recommended as an ideal text on the subject.

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First Steps in Psychotherapy: Teaching Psychotherapy to Medical Students and General Practitioners, edited by H.H. Wolff, W. Knauss and W. Bräutigam. Pp. viii + 164. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, Tokyo, 1985. DM 58.00.

For over 20 years Michael Balint preached and practised a type of small group teaching for general practitioners. This approach, based on dynamically orientated psychotherapy, had great influence in the 1950s and 1960s and Balint type groups spread to several countries in Europe and to the United States. The emphasis in such groups was to make

general practitioners more aware of their influence as persons on their patients.

This book describes the transposition of this type of experience to the teaching of psychotherapy to medical students, as practised in 2 settings – University College Hospital and Heidelberg University in West Germany. In the third section of the book there are some accounts of Balint type work in general practice.

The idea that an undergraduate medical student might take on a patient for psychotherapeutic treatment may still seem surprising to many doctors, yet this is exactly what has been happening at University College Hospital since 1958. The main stimulus for this scheme has come from Heinz Wolff. Essentially students can volunteer to take on a patient whom they then see on their own, once a week for an hour, over a period of several months to a year. Supervision is provided by an experienced psychotherapist once a week in a small group with 3–5 students. In this context, students are introduced to such concepts as transference, countertransference, defence mechanisms and the significance of unconscious processes. Clinical responsibility remains with the referring consultant or the supervising psychotherapist. Since 1977 a similar scheme has operated at the psychosomatic clinic of the University of Heidelberg.

Parts I and II of this book consist of a series of essays, examining and reporting these 2 training schemes from differing viewpoints.

In the opening chapter, Heinz Wolff states that he is not primarily concerned with promoting or teaching a humane, empathic and caring attitude of doctors for patients, but is interested in teaching basic psychological understanding, based on analytically orientated psychotherapy, and yet it is this former area which our technology orientated, 'scientific' medical school training does so appallingly badly. Any approach which encourages our medical students to see a patient as a whole person with thoughts and feelings and not just a cluster of signs and symptoms must be applauded.

The weakness of this book is that it consists of a collection of essays, viewing essentially the same process from many different perspectives. Whilst this adds considerable colour it does make the book essentially anecdotal. I would have certainly welcomed a clearer overall account by a single author with details of exactly how many students took part, how many started and dropped out and how much time the supervising process actually took up. However exciting the idea, there are clearly limitations to an approach which will only be taken up by a small number of medical students. I would have also welcomed a comparison of this approach with what goes on elsewhere in the United Kingdom; for example, the interviewing of patients and pseudo-patients on video with feedback as pioneered in the Department of Psychiatry in Manchester.

Despite these comments this book is to be applauded. Although Dr Wolff has reported his work to the Association of University Teachers of Psychiatry and in one or two psychiatric journals, this is by far the most comprehensive account of what has been an exciting undergraduate teaching programme. There is no doubt that these particular schemes have attracted a number of medical students to psychiatry and to a psychotherapeutic view of certain patients' problems.

Sadly, it may be totally unrealistic to expect this type of teaching to spread to other medical schools in the United