Book Reviews

Cardiovascular Emergencies. Edited by Joseph P. Ornato. Clinics in Emergency Medicine, Vol. 9. Pp. xii+260, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1986. £23.00.

This book is the 9th volume in a series entitled *Clinics in Emergency Medicine* which has previously dealt with various emergencies in medicine, but not cardiovascular emergencies (apart from resuscitation). It is an American multi-author book directed mainly at a group of American doctors who practice solely in accident and emergency departments in both teaching and non-teaching hospitals. Such clinicians in the US may have no exact counterpart in Britain, for the role of doctors in A & E departments in Britain is rather different. In the US, such doctors have a considerable responsibility for the initial diagnosis and emergency treatment of serious medical conditions, whereas in Britain, the general and specialized medical teams usually assume such responsibility. Although the title is *Cardiovascular Emergencies*, the intention is not to cover the whole field, but only subjects that represent new advances in approach or treatment relevant to the A & E setting. These subjects include computer-assisted diagnosis of chest pain, invasive haemodynamic monitoring, supraventricular tachycardia and newer drug treatment of tachycardias, cardiogenic shock, analgesics in cardiac pain relief, thrombolysis in acute myocardial infarction, management of hypertensive emergencies, pacemaker malfunction, pulmonary oedema and surgical cardio-thoracic emergencies. Most of the subjects present a well-balanced review of the present state of the art, and each chapter contains a full list of references. The text includes many useful tables. Illustrations, although sparse, are appropriate.

Most of the subjects covered have been individually reviewed elsewhere in the cardiovascular literature, but this particular collection may not have been gathered together before. An individual doctor will have to judge for himself whether he requires this particular collection of reviews.

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Clinics in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Vol. 13, No. 3, September 1986. **The Human Placenta**, edited by Tim Chard. Pp. x+421-663, illustrated. W.B. Saunders, London, Philadelphia, Toronto, 1986. £15.00.

Literature relating to the study of the placenta either deals with basic anatomy and physiology or the clinical application of knowledge related to the structure and function of the placenta. This volume of 'Clinics series'

deals with both aspects, not only in the volume as a whole but also in individual articles.

The book has ten chapters. The first two chapters deal with the basic anatomy and physiology of the placenta with particular emphasis on imaging techniques as well as the biochemical synthesis in the placenta. The third chapter deals with the immunological function of the placenta, especially in relation to obstetric complications and immunotherapy. There is an excellent chapter on the pathology of the placenta and its relationship to clinical problems. There are two further chapters relating to the biophysical and biochemical functions of the placenta. There is a chapter on the diagnosis and management of placental proteins in oncology, related to both trophoblastic and non-trophoblastic tumours. There is a chapter on the technique of chorion villus sampling and the final chapter is on antepartum and post-partum haemorrhages.

There is a wealth of information related to basic anatomy and physiology and their clinical application. Although the volume is aimed at the basic scientist as well as clinicians, there is a strong clinical bias throughout, which clinicians will welcome. The volume is likely to be of value not only as a reference manual but also as an update for trainees preparing for Membership examinations, as well as obstetricians and paediatricians and others involved in perinatal care.

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Electrodiagnosis in Clinical Neurology. Second edition, edited by Michael J. Aminoff. Pp. xiv+755, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1986. £65.00

The rapid development of clinical neurophysiology is reflected in the increase in scope of this 2nd edition of Dr Aminoff's highly successful book. New chapters have been added on ambulatory EEG monitoring, quantitative aspects of EEG and evoked potentials, blink reflex, electrophysiological evaluation of tremor and central disorders of movement, brainstem auditory evoked potentials in paediatrics, event related (endogenous) potentials, and intraoperative monitoring by evoked potential techniques. Such is the rate of progress that the technique of magnetic stimulation of central motor pathways, which has already generated widespread interest, was introduced too recently to have been included. Nevertheless, some discussion, however tentative, of brain mapping would no doubt have been appreciated by those trying to assess whether the benefits justify the cost.

Routinely used techniques are well described and complemented by extensive bibliographies. It is the reviewer's experience that neurologists and other clinicians