

Book Reviews

Amyloidosis and Amyloid P Component, C.R.K. Hind. Pp. vii+97, illustrated. Longman Scientific & Technical, Harlow, 1986. £17.50.

I enjoyed reading this short monograph of 97 pages on the subject of amyloidosis and amyloid P component. It is an extremely comprehensive review of the current status of amyloidosis and would be of interest to all physicians dealing with this subject. The book is extremely well referenced throughout and appears to be up to date. There are eight chapters dealing comprehensively with systemic amyloidosis, localised amyloidosis, amyloid fibril proteins and their precursors, serum amyloid P component, pathogenesis of amyloid fibril deposition, diagnosis of amyloidosis, and prognosis and management of amyloidosis. I would regard this book as being a very good one for personal usage but certainly it deserves to be in any medical library.

Martin M. Black
St Thomas Hospital
London SE1 7EH

Atlas of Clinical Dermatology, Anthony du Vivier. Pp. viii+412, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1987. £85.

Dr du Vivier has produced a really excellent and comprehensive catalogue of clinical dermatology which should appeal to all those who have to deal with patients with skin disease. The numerous illustrations, mostly of superb quality, depict not only the clinical manifestations of various dermatoses but also include selected histopathological photomicrographs and electron micrographs. Tables and diagrams have been added where appropriate and the text is clear, helpful and concise.

The chapters are logically arranged starting with a most useful section on normal skin and, although concentrating on common disorders many rarer conditions are discussed where there is an important point to be made. The selection of clinical photographs is excellent. Possibly the choice of histological illustrations is less well balanced (seventeen of mycosis fungoides and not one of syphilis) but overall they complement the clinical material very well. Dr du Vivier does not suggest at whom his atlas is mainly directed, but one assumes that the dermatologist in training is likely more than most to benefit from the splendid combination of short textbook, clinical atlas and dermatopathology primer. The price is very reasonable for a work with so many colour illustrations and many doctors will want their own copy both as a superb teaching reference and an eminently readable book through which to browse.

Neil Smith
St John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin,
London WC2H 7BJ

Atlas of Cutaneous Surgery, Neil A. Swanson. Pp. xiii+177, illustrated. Little, Brown, Boston, Toronto, 1987. £21.50.

As a plastic surgeon I find little to commend this book which contains a crude description of basic plastic surgery by a dermatologist. The author has obviously enjoyed his own experience of cutaneous surgery and wishes others to share this. He explains in the preface that 'it is the goal of this book to help physicians to discover the fun of cutaneous surgery'. While it is commendable to enjoy one's work it is also important not to treat patients as toys with which to play.

The first chapter on basic techniques starts with a very basic account of some surgical instruments with a bias of the author's favourites. The purpose of the difference between similar instruments such as the toothed and non-toothed forceps is, however, not made clear. A long section on suture techniques elaborates on the different types without indicating in detail when and where they are useful. One of the few examples given is the use of a vertical mattress suture in the forehead which I expect would be deplored by any plastic surgeon.

The second chapter on advanced techniques describes the different types of flaps. Each flap is described as being most useful without any clear indication of when and where this is the case. The third chapter on skin grafts describes the principles of skin grafting but many important practical aspects are omitted or inadequately explained. In the appendices there are misleading diagrams of tension lines and the anatomical drawings are very primitive.

While it is important for all dermatologists to know and understand the basic principles of surgery of skin lesions, I would suggest a few hours spent with a plastic surgeon in theatre would be far more profitable than pursuing the exercises on pigs feet which are described and encouraged throughout this book.

M.D. Brough
University College Hospital,
London WC1E 6AJ.

Clinics in Immunology and Allergy. Vol. 6, no. 3, Oct. 1986. **AIDS and HIV Infection**, edited by Anthony J. Pinching. Pp. x+687, illustrated. W.B. Saunders Company, London, Philadelphia, Toronto, 1986. £17.50.

I was asked to review this book in June 1987, but was unable to put pen to paper until October, one full year after publication. Nothing much written about AIDS nowadays stands the test of time; the epidemiology is changing as the disease moves out of the homosexual community, every month something new is discovered about the virus and the treatment of infected patients. Nevertheless, this book has a compactness about it, and comprehensively covers the clinical aspects of AIDS as