Book Reviews

Urologic Surgery, edited by J.E. Fowler. Pp. 734, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, London, Edinburgh, 1992. Hardback £120.00.

This book is a well-constructed, comprehensive guide to operative urology. The contributors are almost exclusively American urological surgeons chosen for their particular experience and expertise in the surgical procedures they describe. Each chapter is followed by special comments either by the editor or by other well-known urologists which serve to enhance the contribution by expanding and elaborating upon areas considered to be of particular importance. This is therefore more than just an atlas of surgical technique. The line diagrams and illustrations are outstanding but the text describes patient selection, preoperative investigation and preparation together with postoperative management. Most authors discuss possible complications and include advice on how to avoid them or how to deal with them if they occur. There is no chapter on laparoscopic urological techniques but this has been evolving while this book was being compiled. Each chapter concludes with a list of references for suggested further reading. This is a beautifully produced and illustrated textbook with the editor's own chapter on radical retropubic prostatectomy setting the very high standard that is achieved throughout.

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Textbook of Endocrine Physiology, J.E. Griffin and S.R. Ojeda. Pp. viii + 351, illustrated. OUP, USA, 1992. Paperback £16.95.

I enjoyed reading this short, concise, and very well written introduction to the 'Physiology of the Endocrine System'.

This book undoubtedly merits very high marks. Although a cardiologist by training, being a professor of medicine I enjoyed reading this book which gave me a new insight into endocrine physiology. The authors have clearly stated that the book is meant for undergraduate students. Having studied endocrine physiology through this book I can recommend it even to doctors taking the membership examination.

The format, the printing, and the overall get-up of the book are excellent. A detailed index at the end is a great help for ready reference to the user. This book should find a place in every medical school library.

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Screening and Surveillance in General Practice, C. Hart and P. Burke. Pp. 416, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Milan, New York, 1992. Hardback £49.50.

Preventative medicine is now seen as an increasingly important part of general practice. Significant developments have taken place since *Screening in General Practice*, the predecessor to this volume, was published in 1975. The word surveillance has been added to the title to reflect the increased scope of screening in the 1990s.

Although the majority of the authors are general practitioners, a multi-disciplinary approach has been adopted with contributions from academics, specialists and community physicians where appropriate.

The book is divided into seven sections, the initial two covering the history, theory, economics and ethics of screening as well as the practical problems encountered; there is a particularly important chapter on the use of computers. The next four sections cover the great majority of screening procedures currently undertaken in general practice, classified according to the age of the target group. This 'state of the art' review summarizes current knowledge and practice in commendable depth.

The final section explores the role of screening in preventing illness caused by a patient's lifestyle. This is an innovative section indicating many possible areas for future development.

Although the book is written for general practitioners, workers in other disciplines will find much of value. It is a practical handbook as well as a valuable source of reference; all practices should possess a copy.

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Spinal Cord Dysfunction, Volume III, L.S. Illis. Pp. xii + 360, illustrated. Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1992. Hardback £50.00.

This is the third in a series of scholarly multi-author monographs on the spinal cord edited by Dr Illis. Volume I covered assessment, Volume II intervention and treatment and the present volume discusses the theory, practice and results of spinal cord stimulation. Illis himself contributes a section on spinal cord recovery after injury and the background to spinal cord stimulation which admirably sets out our present understanding in this area and should be required reading for trainees in neurology. There are highly technical sections on the theoretical and experimental aspects of spinal cord stimulation and then a series of reviews of the clinical usefulness of peripheral nervous system and spinal cord stimulation. The basis and justification for the use of spinal cord stimulation in chronic pain, spasticity and bladder dysfunction is discussed. Their conclusions remind clinicians who practise away from centres where spinal cord stimulation is routinely performed of the place of these techniques in the management of patients when conventional pharmacological techniques have failed. A final chapter reviews the relationship between spinal cord stimulation and spinal opiodergic activation. This is not an everyday book for