Book Reviews


Dr Mary Crosse has made good use of her great-grandfather’s diaries and casebooks to tell the story of his life which spanned the sixty years between 1790 and 1850. The courage and technical skill required to engage in operative surgery in the pre-anaesthetic era and produce, among other things, a series of over five hundred lithotomies with a successful outcome in 90 per cent could only be acquired by a long apprenticeship. This training is well described and it is of note that at the stage we would now describe as senior registrar the routine duties included frequent nocturnal parleys with “resurrectionists.” The portrait is developed of a man of great industry and integrity who had all the virtues and very few of the vices of a true surgeon.

This is a most attractive book which should be required bedside reading for all of those who are lucky enough to practise surgery under less difficult conditions.—R. C. F. Catterall.

A System of Orthopaedics and Fractures. By A. Graham Apley, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S., Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, the Rowley Bristow Orthopaedic Hospital, Pyrford, Surrey; Surgeon in Charge of the Accident and Emergency Centre, St Peter’s Hospital, Chertsey. Third edition. 21·5 cm. x 18 cm. Pp. x + 548, with many figures. Index. 1968. Butterworth & Co. (Publishers) Ltd. £6 6s.

In the nine years since its first edition this book of expanded lecture notes to final fellowship candidates has become an accepted textbook of orthopaedics and fractures. The third edition differs from earlier ones in only one major respect—it is illustrated. The text remains essentially unchanged, though the discerning reader will notice a few changes. The chapter on rheumatoid arthritis has been extensively rewritten, and a new chapter has been added on the management of major accidents. The helpful suggestions for further reading given at the end of each section have been brought up to date. There is thus little new to comment on in the text. Facts are presented with brevity and dogmatism—inevitable and, indeed, desirable in a book designed for examination purposes and quick reference. The excitement of this new edition lies in its illustrations. These and not expansion of the text account for the increased size and price of the book. One thousand, eight hundred and two excellent illustrations have been included and their value has been enhanced by grouping them into 312 composite pictures, each telling a story. These illustrations with their pithy subtitles provide a revision course in themselves and add enormously to the value and enjoyment of the book as a whole, making it now as visually exciting as it has always been mentally stimulating. This new edition will appeal to both undergraduate and postgraduate readers who are looking for a concise, uncontroversial and readable book on orthopaedics and fractures. It is also highly commended to those who have the privilege of teaching them.—David L. Evans.


All orthopaedic surgeons who work in accident centres will be aware of the difficulties in the treatment of facial injuries, particularly when they co-exist with other skeletal lesions. When expert
dental advice is available to the accident service, proper integration of treatment can be arranged, but there must be many surgeons who are devoid of such support. For these it can confidently be stated that a more complete work on facial fractures can hardly be envisaged and all aspects of management are comprehensively set out. It will be encouraging to note how much effective treatment can be carried out with simple instruments and materials and the absence of elaborate laboratory services need not deny the patient effective immobilisation in many instances. The first 200 pages deal with fractures of the mandible and all aspects of treatment are discussed. There is a useful chapter on temporo-mandibular joint injuries and the chapter on complications of lower jaw fractures is well worth while reading. In the second 250 pages will be found all that should be known about fracture of the middle third of the face. This includes the maxillae, the nose and the malarzygomatic bones. The importance of diagnosis and early treatment of the orbital “blow-out” fracture is rightly emphasised, and of the complications which may occur their cranial and ocular manifestations are considered in detail. The last 400 pages contain a wealth of information on gunshot wounds, soft-tissue injuries, radiology of the facial skeleton and the many technological aspects which form part of a fully developed maxillo-facial service.

It need scarcely be mentioned that this book is profusely illustrated and offers a comprehensive bibliography. Within the compass of this vast work lies all the information that both the tyro and the expert could possibly require to deal effectively with the mounting toll of facial injuries, a legacy of our “auto age.”—John N. Barron.


Schmorl died shortly after the appearance of the first edition of this book in 1932 as a result of an infection caught when working in the post-mortem room at his favourite subject at the age of seventy-two. His dedication to his work was thus indirectly the cause of his death and is convincing evidence, if ever evidence is required, of the thoroughness with which he tackled his subject. Not surprisingly this has become a standard reference book on the subject of pathological anatomy of the spine, but owing to the war the second edition did not appear until 1951. Since then a French edition was published in 1956, and English, Italian and Spanish editions in 1959. Discussion of the pathological conditions of the spine is largely limited to the clinical findings and surgical treatment is only considered to a limited degree. The book as an encyclopaedia of spinal disease is difficult to criticise. One can only emphasise its thoroughness and in particular the precise and extensive literary references. Many readers will find access to the 1959 English edition more convenient but Dr Junghanns deserves credit for continuing Schmorl’s work with almost equal thoroughness and one can imagine Schmorl if in a position to comment saying, “Well done, good and faithful pupil.”—J. G. Bonna.


The third edition of Surgery of Repair as Applied to Hand Injuries adds John Hueston as one of the authors. The book is a classic amongst the now numerous volumes on hand surgery. It is concise, clear, practical, well informed; in other words superb. Anyone doing hand surgery either as an expert or as the “occasional” surgeon cannot but have this book, read it and reread it. There are some books which by their very excellence on a particular subject become classics on their first publication and this has always been one of these rare volumes. Sometimes such books become lengthy and less satisfactory with each new edition but this problem has been avoided.

The senior authors mention that when they first wrote this book they were helping to lead a crusade to establish reparative surgery of the hand after injury as a major speciality requiring immediate