BOOK REVIEWS

Children's Fractures. By Mercer RANG, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S. (Eng.), F.R.C.S.(C), Orthopaedic Surgeon, the Hospital for Sick Children and the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, Toronto. With five contributors. 28 × 22 cm. Pp. xiv+238, with many figures and some tables. Index. 1974. Philadelphia and Toronto: J. B. Lippincott Company. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. Price £15.40.

I can think of few textbooks that could succeed, as this one did, in keeping me thoroughly interested and entertained for most of a six-hour train journey. The writing is typical of Mercer Rang—easy and delightful to read, anecdotal when appropriate, and brim-full of useful messages. For example, in discussing the management of ischaemia occurring in the course of fracture treatment, "Be vigilant, be quick and be decisive. If you are lucky, removing bandages, bivalving the cast, and placing the limb in a dependent position may be enough to improve the circulation. If you are the Resident, get on and do this. Do not call your chief first, however precious the patient or the reduction." Throughout, the main concern is with the practicalities of treatment, and it is primarily written for the Senior Houseman or Registrar in the Accident and Emergency or Orthopaedic Department. There are, however, few consultants who would not learn something from reading this excellent book. (Are you aware of Waddell's triad? If not, perhaps you should get this book and find out.) The illustrations are lavish and well produced but for a radiograph upside down (the third example I have come across in books published during the last year). There will be general approval for the recommended methods of treatment of individual fractures. As the author himself says, "put a case up at rounds and there will always be somebody who would have done something else". I was rather surprised to find no mention of a possible need for open reduction of the radial head in Monteggia injuries and wondered whether his curt dismissal of Galeazzi's fracture-dislocation as uncommon and easily managed by reduction of the radius was justified. In the chapter on femoral shaft fractures, it was unusual, in a book so full of excellent practical advice, not to find some mention of the problem of swelling under the ring of a Thomas splint. But these are minor matters and should not detract from the fact that this is a superb new contribution to the literature.—W. J. W. SHARRARD.

Pediatric Orthopedic Nursing. By Nancy E. HILT, R.N., Orthopedic Nurse Specialist, and E. William SCHMITT, Jun., M.D., Chief, Orthopedic Surgery, Henrietta Egleston Hospital for Children, Atlanta, Georgia. With four contributors. 26 × 18 cm. Pp. xviii+248, with 301 figures and 5 tables. Index. 1975. Saint Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company. London: Henry Kimpton. Price £6.15.

The preface draws attention to the number of specialities that have developed within the nursing profession over the years and points out that paediatric orthopaedics is "a special entity separated from pediatrics or adult orthopaedics". Dr W. T. Green, the father of the speciality in America, recognised the importance of good nursing care and held the view that

"What the orthopaedic surgeon is able to do for any child is of no value without expert nursing care". Unfortunately the authors have experienced a degree of frustration from the lack of literature available in their particular field. In writing this book they have included some of the basic principles of paediatric and of orthopaedic nursing, but have attempted to "intertwine them with additional principles applicable to just pediatric orthopaedics".

The work starts with a history of paediatric orthopaedic nursing. It is interesting to note that tribute is paid to the work of Dame Agnes Hunt and Sir Robert Jones before the development of the speciality in America is outlined. The importance of observation as the key to success is stressed, and the need for the nurse to recognise the onset of complications so that their effects may be decreased if not totally avoided.

There follows a brief account of the various orthopaedic conditions in children and the problems that may arise in each case. The text is then devoted to all aspects of nursing care, including special beds, casts and splints and the principles of traction. A chapter is devoted to consideration of the use of restraints for children in traction and guide lines are laid down. I like the use of Nursing Care Plans, which identify the specific needs of the individual patient, and the Routine Nursing Care required for the various types of traction. Both can be inserted in the nursing Kardex.

The need for emotional support of the child and parents is discussed and the importance of play as a "safety valve". The work ends by defining the roles of each member of the paediatric orthopaedic team and uses a case history to illustrate how the members of the team can work towards a common goal.

The text is well illustrated with line drawings and photographs and there is a glossary of terms, a bibliography and an index. I found the book most interesting and have no hesitation in recommending it to all nurses who are working in this field.—Joyce W. ROWE.

The Arteries and Veins of the Human Spinal Cord at Birth. By G. F. DOMMISSE, M.D., Ch.M., F.R.C.S.(Ed.), Department of Orthopaedics, University of Pretoria. 25 × 19 cm. Pp. viii+104, with many figures and tables, and 30 colour plates. Index. 1975. Edinburgh, London and New York: Churchill Livingstone. Price £9.

In 1970 the author started to study the arterial supply and venous drainage of the spinal cord in an attempt to clarify uncertainties about the variations in spinal cord circulation and, in particular, to test the validity of the concept that the critical level in the cord circulation was the tenth thoracic vertebra where the "arteria radicularis anterior magna", the artery of Adamkiewicz, is often found. He investigated forty-two spinal cords whose vessels were perfused with red latex and subjected to microdissection with the cord *in situ*. Photographs at various magnifications were made at all levels. Some additional studies of the vessels of the spinal cord were also made by injection of radio-opaque substances and radiography, and a few experiments using carotid angiography in baboons were used to demonstrate certain features of Batson's venous plexus.

The detailed results are described in this beautifully produced monograph, illustrated by a carefully chosen selection of black and white figures and coloured plates and accompanied by clear, well written descriptions of the findings. The variations in the main feeder vessels of the cord and the levels at which they enter the spinal canal are analysed in a series of diagrams.

This work should answer, in perpetuity, the questions that have vexed anatomists and surgeons about the blood supply of the spinal cord and about the areas of potential danger and relative safety in surgical procedures. Every surgeon must, in some degree, be a practical anatomist; the increased use of anterior approaches and the more frequent performance of operations on the vertebral bodies make a knowledge of the details of the vessels that may be encountered vital for the safety of the patient and the peace of mind of the surgeon. Every orthopaedic department should have this book available for reference, and many surgeons whose work is concerned with spinal surgery or with traumatic or congenital paraplegia will wish to have this excellent monograph on their own shelves.—W. J. W. SHARRARD.

The Care of the Rheumatoid Hand. By Adrian E. FLATT, M.D., M.Chir., F.R.C.S., F.A.C.S., Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Iowa. Foreword by Russell L. CECIL, M.D. Third edition. 25×7.5 cm. Pp. xi+296, with 294 figures and 9 tables. Index. 1974. Saint Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company. London: Henry Kimpton. Price £12.25.

The close cooperation of rheumatologists and orthopaedic surgeons is today more necessary than ever. It is now widely believed that the patient with rheumatoid disease can be helped to a great extent by timely, and sometimes courageous, surgical intervention. For many patients there need be one such episode, for others repeated operations are necessary to preserve a modicum of function and well-being. It is also obvious to both surgeon and rheumatologist that the necessity and timing of an operation have to be a combined decision, because the rheumatologist is the best person to prepare the patient before operation, which may take some weeks, and in the same way he is best able to supervise the progress of the general condition afterwards.

Because of this properly conceived attitude towards the whole patient it might be thought impossible to write a book solely on the rheumatoid hand. Dr Adrian Flatt, an orthopaedic surgeon who has made the hand his special study, has faced the difficulty and succeeded well. It is often difficult to decide whether fingers, wrist, knee or ankle should be dealt with first, and in this book this aspect obviously cannot be dealt with to the full; nevertheless it does fulfil a very great need despite being in isolation, of which the author is most conscious. When the necessity for an operation on the hand has been agreed, the decision on the best procedure still has to be made. It is then that this book becomes invaluable.

No operation on a part of the hand can be judged on its result in isolation because it is the function of the whole hand as a part of the whole patient that is so important. Adrian Flatt has been able to show the importance of decisions at this level and gives an erudite and experienced account of the main surgical procedures that can be used to ameliorate the disability caused by the disease. The subject is a difficult one to compress into a simple outline of orthopaedic procedures, but this has been done, and done very well.

There are only a few details over which one may take issue; for example it would be an improvement if Dr Flatt gave first his own experience and opinions and afterwards

recounted those of others. It is what he himself would do that needs the emphasis. Perhaps the division between non-operative and operative treatment could be discarded, because an operation should be considered an incident in the treatment of the rheumatoid patient. Such remarks do not detract from a book that is well written and well illustrated, with a good index and bibliography.—M. DEVAS.

Symposium on Reconstructive Hand Surgery. Volume 9. Proceedings of a Symposium held at Rockefeller University, the New York Hospital—Cornell Medical Center, New York, November 2 to 4, 1972. Edited by J. William LITTLER, M.D., Lester M. CRAMER, M.D., and James W. SMITH, M.D. 28×22 cm. Pp. x+324, with 458 figures, including two colour plates and some tables. Index. 1974. Saint Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company. London: Henry Kimpton. Price £20.20.

This record of a three-day symposium on the care of the disabled hand concentrates on what are described as fundamental and technical aspects of special problems. There are thirty-five contributors, and the subject matter extends from basic principles to sophisticated procedures made possible by microsurgical techniques.

In each of the nine parts there is a discussion, recorded as though one is actually listening to the meeting. These parts include basic architecture and functional anatomy, vascular anatomy and physiology, surgical considerations, service coverage, selected hand problems, hand problems frequent in plastic and reconstructive surgery, "what is new", some biological and philosophical thoughts of a surgeon, and lastly, techniques in microsurgery. The book is obviously intended for reference and designed for the connoisseur.

The section on "What is New" is full of interest; it includes the use of catheters in the treatment of infections of the hand, new instruments in hand surgery, and especially advances in nerve repair. This chapter, written by Professor Millesi, covers only two pages but contains fifty-one references and is an excellent source of knowledge on present trends.

Techniques in microsurgery are particularly dealt with in the last section, and one author records an experience of thirty-four successful reimplantations of totally amputated digits. Adrian Flatt deals with prosthetic joints and concludes with a plea for us to remember and act on the words of that wise man, Sir Herbert Seddon, who said that "a great deal of surgical activity has misfired, the patients being the losers, because it never occurred to clinicians to consult an engineer before embarking on some ingenious venture".

This book is full of thoughtful reminders of basic principles and a very useful addition to the library of any surgeon particularly interested in the subject.—A. H. C. RATLIFF.

Metabolic Disorders of Bone—By C. R. PATERSON, M.A., B.Sc., D.M., M.R.C.Path., Senior Lecturer in Clinical Chemistry, University of Dundee. 24×16 cm. Pp. x+373, with many figures and tables. Index. 1974. Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Melbourne: Blackwell Scientific Publications. Price £8.25.

In recent years important advances in bone physiology and biochemistry have made a major contribution to the understanding and treatment of metabolic bone disease. Unfortunately the orthopaedic surgeon, to whom many of these diseases present, is often too preoccupied by service commitments fully to keep abreast of these new developments. This