

Book Reviews

THE ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY OF THE MAMMALIAN LARYNX

D. F. N. Harrison, Cambridge University Press, 1995. ISBN 0521 453216. Price £45.00.

Sir Donald Harrison is a man of many parts. Not only did he hold the first Chair of Laryngology and Otology in this country and made many contributions to the surgery of cancer of the larynx, but he has also, for many years, indulged in a passion for comparative anatomy. With true devotion to the Hunterian tradition, and following in the footsteps of that pioneer of the comparative anatomy of the larynx, Sir Victor Negus of King's College Hospital, he has collected and studied larynges of over 1,400 species of mammal over a period of 17 years. This study has involved the dissection, serial, sectioning and photography of a vast array of material assembled from all over the world and has resulted in a stream of publications. Now Sir Donald has crystallized a professional life-time of work in this beautifully produced and illustrated monograph. It is full of surprising pieces of knowledge; for example, that the left recurrent laryngeal nerve in the giraffe is two metres long and thus holds the record for the longest nerve in the animal kingdom. How then does the nervous impulse to each side of the larynx arrive there more or less simultaneously when the left recurrent nerve is 30 cm longer than the right? Good scientist that he is, the author measured the fibre size frequency of myelinated fibres on the left and right side in a couple of giraffe and found a preponderance of large (and therefore more rapidly conducting) fibres in the left nerve.

Successive sections deal with the detailed structure of each anatomical component of the larynx and then consider the physiology of respiration, locomotion (for example, many aquatic mammals have a comparatively large trachea and larynx, which enable rapid repayment of the oxygen debt on resurfacing) and vocalization. A final chapter deals with the evolution of the larynx.

This monograph will appeal to a wide range of readers, certainly anatomists, zoologists and physiologists researching in this field. Surgeons, especially those involved in head and neck work, will find that reading this book will give them new insight into the structure and workings of this complex and fascinating organ.

PROFESSOR HAROLD ELLIS

DISEASES OF THE EAR, NOSE AND THROAT

P. D. Bull, Eighth edition. Blackwell Science Inc. 1996. ISBN 0 865 42 634 1 Price £12.95. 198 pages.

Diseases of the Ear, Nose and Throat is from the *Lecture Notes* series and aims to introduce medical students and junior doctors to the subject. The text is now white-coat pocket sized for handy reference. The eighth edition has

been extensively revised and updated with additional information on head and neck malignancy, sinus disease, salivary gland disease, paediatric airway problems and rehabilitation. The emphasis throughout is on conditions encountered in general practice and the common emergency situations. The anatomy and pathophysiology of each is outlined in sufficient detail to explain the principles of clinical management. Symptoms and signs and the key points to look out for on clinical examination are listed in coloured reference boxes and many comprehensive revision lists appear throughout the text for students who enjoy this format. Practical advice for the houseman, for example in the management of epistaxis, is always welcome. Colour has been introduced to the enlarged and stylized diagrams which adds to the appeal of the book, and certainly make it more eye-catching. In some cases, however, the clarity appears to have been compromised when compared to their black and white counterparts in previous editions, in particular the nasal illustrations. With the current popularity of day-case surgery it was odd to read that a patient may go home after two days after an SMR! I found the description of the use of the tuning fork was laboured and not very clear. However, *Diseases of the Ear, Nose and Throat* remains a core student text with a clear and systematic approach to the subject, it is in a succinct note and list format and is therefore ideal as a revision aid and as a pocket reference.

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CLINICAL OTORHINOLARYNGOLOGY

A. Drake-Lee. Churchill Livingstone. 1995. ISBN 0 443049653. Price £13.50. 267 pages.

Clinical Otorhinolaryngology is a book for the more discerning medical student. A straightforward account of the presentation of diseases of the head and neck is given in a clinically orientated and useful way, explaining how to take a careful history around each presenting symptom. The text is divided into the five main areas and the aetiology of disease, symptoms and signs and their management are described. Case histories are used well to illustrate and reiterate important points. The text is in relatively lighthearted prose which makes it less appealing as a revision text but an altogether more enjoyable and interesting read.

There is a great deal of practical advice with interesting little gems of information liberally scattered throughout to stimulate the interest of the student and enhance learning. The cautionary tales will increase the retention of important facts. Summary boxes containing the key questions in the history and key points on examination are included. Although in general the presentation is not so attractive as *Lecture Notes* the