

Book Reviews

THE EXTERNAL EAR

Lucente, Lawson and Novick. W B Saunders Company, USA. 1994. ISBN 0721656676. Price £65.00.

This multi-authored book is a successor to the original book by Benn Senturia. It composes 18 chapters covering all aspects of the external ear and has six double pages of colour illustrations which are excellent but too small.

One of the authors, Dr Novick, is a Dermatologist, and this addition is very useful indeed and adds to the book considerably. Chapter one is a good representation of Anatomy and Physiology but the bibliography is somewhat short. Chapter two deals with methods of examination and is dreadfully old fashioned. There is neither a mention nor a sight of a microscope. The Dermatological chapters are very good indeed and well worthy of being read by all otologists. This is particularly true of the chapter on infections and otitis externa and allergic disease. The chapter on the pathology of tumours of the external ear was excellent and full and uncyclopaedic as was the chapter on the management of malignant tumours of the external ear. This illustrated how dangerous this disease is and what poor results we have from treatment. Management of acute trauma is well covered but it desperately needs more photographs dealing with the somewhat complex methods described.

One chapter on psychocutaneous disorders was very good indeed and illustrates that this condition was grossly under diagnosed by otologists. The chapter on otoplasty was a very good overview although the diagrams and photographs could have been more clear. The methods of auricular reconstruction following trauma or surgery were interesting and I was interested to hear how poor the results are for micro-vascular re-attachment for traumatic amputation. A chapter on Surgical Management of the External Auditory Canal was somewhat limited because of no mention of diagnoses and although well illustrated there were no results given whatsoever.

Perhaps the most disappointing part of this book are the chapters on malformations and congenital atresia. As so often when discussing this situation there are encyclopaedic lists of diseases which are associated with external ear and middle ear deformities but the illustrations are poor and the post-operative illustrations not present at all. There are no long term results given for the surgical reconstruction of hereditary aural atresia and most damning of all absolutely no mention or illustration of prosthetic reconstructions. This is a great flaw in this book and unfortunately spoils it.

I would not recommend it be bought by the jobbing otologist but of course it should be stocked in a library.

Most otologists would benefit from reading the Dermatological chapters.

The concept of a book entirely on the external ear is I am sure the correct one. I think it is such a shame that the opportunity of making this a first class book has been lost by the constraints placed upon our American colleagues and their inability, until recently, to use osseointegration for auricular reconstructions.

DAVID N PROOPS

COCHLEAR IMPLANTS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

McCormich, Archbold and Sheppard (eds.). Whurr Publishers, London. 1994. ISBN 189763580X. Price £24.50 (PB). pp 300.

There are few subjects that are as misunderstood as cochlear implants and their place in the management of deafness. Implantation in children is even more fraught. In the first instance we have to face the high expectation of the parents of a child born deaf who often demand, in their despair, instant cure by an operation which will give them a totally normal child. Those working in the field in the past had to repeat again and again that there are still a few things which could not be simply cured but which could be helped with hearing aids and with expert training. This partial solution has never been totally accepted by parents who still come with newspaper cuttings about miraculous results in America and we still received faxes from abroad referring to miracles in England. Associations of workers and parents had tried their best to counsel and convince the newly afflicted that there is no alternative to amplification and proper teaching, if the children are to be given a chance to develop speech. When cochlear implants appeared on the scene, the hopeful misconception that electrical implants were like new ears took hold at once with many parents certain that they gave normal hearing without the need for hearing aids. The various groups and organizations countered these dangerous fantasies only to find themselves becoming hostile to the concept of progress. Today there is also the more painful hostility of some among the non-verbal deaf who consider sign language to be a minority culture which should be defended from the inroads made by cochlear implants.

It is against such a background that we must welcome this excellent book. Rarely has there been such a need and rarely has a need been satisfied so well. Some years ago the DHSS decided to concentrate resources where cochlear implants are concerned and a group in Nottingham was chosen to set up a paediatric programme. They, led by Barry McCormich, are the authors of this book which is based on their experience. The programme itself has been a marked success story

which has allowed this country to hold its head high at international gatherings and the quality of their work is reflected by the thoughtfulness of their writing. Such Archbold's chapter on the setting up of programmes will be very valuable to any authority wishing to consider such developments whilst Sarah Sheppard's difficult technical descriptions are clear and easy to read. The chapters on rehabilitation and monitoring are particularly important and the surgeons, Gibbin and O'Donoghue, also write a valuable chapter on the medical aspects. Barry McCormick, who is the senior editor, is recognized as a leader in the field of assessment and he tackles the most controversial problem, that of deciding which small child might benefit in a straightforward and clear manner. Hazel Lloyd's contribution on the role played by the family is enhanced by her case histories and should be read by and discussed with the parents of profoundly deaf children.

Altogether this book should be bought by everyone with an interest in the management of the severely deaf and many parents would also find great benefit in reading it.

ELLIS DOVEK

GLUE EAR IN CHILDHOOD: OTITIS MEDIA WITH EFFUSION IN CHILDREN

Richard Maw. Cambridge University Press. 1995. ISBN 1898683034. Price £29.95 (US\$49.95) (HB). pp 136.

An interviewer lacking inspiration will sometimes fall back on the challenging question of what recent publication has truly altered the candidate's clinical practice. A personal response would include the Glasgow work on assessing tympanoplasty benefit, the Copenhagen studies on surgery of Menière's Disease and (by no means last on this list) the literary output from Bristol on OME.

This monograph is based on research which started in 1977 and has produced 36 publications between 1979–1994! The text opens with a literature review, covering such topics as incidence, risk factors, immunology, atopy based on approximately 300 references, some published as recently as last year. Subsequent chapters consider that influence of nasopharyngeal and adenoid disease, complications of OME and, more importantly, of its treatment by grommet insertion. The many graphs and tables seem daunting but do make this an authoritative work. The text is very readable with paragraphs nicely headed for the more casual browser and could still surprise this (well-read?) otologist. We learn that:

Children with mucoviscidosis are not at increased risk of OME! Tympanic retraction could be due to an abnormally patent Eustachian tube! Hearing aid usage in OME has not been evaluated in the literature! The Surgeon, the audiologist, the paediatrician will find much of interest here. Our political masters who dismiss surgery of OME as merely 'ineffective' and trusts rationing such treatment might equally be inspired to read on.

This is a remarkable work showing what can be

achieved by an enthusiast prepared to recruit sufficient numbers into properly designed trials and it is likely to remain for many years the definitive text on this subject.

A nicely printed hardback book published at a price that would purchase sufficient grommets for only five children (if you treat both ears!) is a sound investment from any budget, if it rationalizes the decision to operate.

LIAM M FLOOD

THE MEDICAL PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO PAEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGY

Barry McCormick. Cambridge University Press. 1995. ISBN 0521459885. Price £14.95 (US\$29.95) (PB).

This book provides essential information for any medical practitioner involved in the care of children with hearing impairment. It is a book for the non-specialist which introduces the subject to the novice, and yet gives sufficient detailed information to enable those engaged in intermediate audiology clinics to perform to national standards.

The chapters are well written, with clear and concise presentation of information, the text being scientifically accurate without unexplained technical jargon. Each chapter deals with a specific aspect of testing or audiological management. All standard hearing test techniques are described. Management issues focus on otitis media with effusion, hearing aids and tactics for sensorineural hearing loss and cochlear implants.

There is one important omission from this otherwise excellent book. There is no reference to communication disorders, either those arising from hearing impairment, or those which may be confused with hearing impairment. This is unfortunate as those practitioners requiring audiological information also require an understanding of speech development, and the impact of hearing impairment upon communication.

S SNASHALL

COLOUR ATLAS OF ENT DIAGNOSIS

Tony R Bull. Times Mirror International Publishers. 1995. ISBN 0723422710. Price £18.95.

The third edition of Mr Bull's excellent colour atlas appears eight years after the previous edition. The format and the majority of the clinical photographs remain largely unchanged, however it is updated to include reference to advances in CT & MRI scanning, developments in fibroptic techniques and endoscopic sinus surgery, as well as fine needle aspiration cytology. The layout makes for easy and stimulating reference for the intended readership of medical students and casualty officers, as well as for those in the early stages of their otolaryngological careers. The standard of photography is for the most part excellent, although some might find one or two of the photographs of the tympanic membrane a little difficult to interpret. The text is kept appropriately simple, with many useful clinical pearls of wisdom. I have found the slide library