Book Reviews


There is a wealth of reliable information and wise guidance in this potentially useful book. After a short introduction it begins with a 28 page survey of the more important and available antibiotics, then continues with chapters on their use (mainly therapeutic) in the various branches of surgery. The last chapter, on the choice of antibiotics and the assessment of new ones, is especially sound but might have been better combined with chapter 2 so that the general principles of antimicrobial therapy could be found all in one place. There is some advice on the prophylactic use of antibiotics in the various specialist chapters, but a general discussion of the principles of antibiotic prophylaxis would have been useful. There is a reference list at the end of each chapter but the inquiring reader will have difficulty in relating this to specific topics because there are no references in the text.

Rarely have I reviewed a book in which there was so little to fault in the scientific material; but rarely have I reviewed one of similar size that took me so long to read—because it was such hard reading. Essential material, for which a reader will long search without the help of a good index, is entangled in a tautological forest of awkward and unclear sentences that call for frequent rereading. If there is to be another edition of this book, and I hope that there is, skilled editing would reduce it to little more than half the present size without loss of facts but with great gain in clarity and accessibility of content.

ROBERT BLOWERS


This slim paperback volume is part of the World Health Organisation Technical Report Series, and was produced by a committee of distinguished authorities including clinicians, epidemiologists, and pathologists. It is written in a clear, concise, and didactic style, and an enormous amount of useful information is contained in its 80 pages. The emphasis is mainly towards clinical aspects of trophoblastic disease, and discussion of the pathology, although comprehensive, is not surprisingly rather superficial. Nevertheless, this is an excellent report, right up to date, and with a good reference list. At just over £2 it represents tremendous value and I recommend every department which deals with gynaecological pathology to buy it.

CW ELSTON

Some new titles

The receipt of books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits.


