

to dermatologists and general surgeons interested in sclerotherapy. It should be present in hospital and reference libraries.

DR A. AL SHAHRI FRCS (Edin) FRCS (Glas)
*Consultant General Surgeon,
 Riyadh Military Hospital, PO Box 7897,
 Riyadh 11159, Saudi Arabia*

Current Obstetric Medicine Vol 1

Editor in Chief R. V. Lee

Associate Editors-W. M. Barrow, D. B. Cotton,

D. Coustan

380 pp. £48.00

Mosby—Year Book Inc., St Louis, USA, 1991

ISBN 0-8151-5647-2

This is the inaugural volume of Current Obstetric Medicine. The editors have selected twelve subjects from different clinical fields according to their importance and occurrence in pregnancy. They have realized that there is ever increasing travel by pregnant women to different parts of the world and that there are risks involved in visiting areas endemic for infectious diseases. The chapter on travel during pregnancy covers in depth the problems involved, including immunization.

Diabetes mellitus is a common disease and it has major effects on pregnancy and the fetus. The benefits of pre-conception counselling and management of diabetes prior to pregnancy have been well discussed and correlated with clinical and animal studies.

The chapters on neurological, hepatic and pituitary disorders cover these subjects in a concise manner but elaborate particularly on some problems, for example, myasthenia, epilepsy, prolactinoma, diabetes insipidus (including transient diabetes insipidus).

The chapter on cardiac diseases covers structural lesions well. Congenital lesions are discussed individually. The effects of renal failure on pregnancy are well discussed. A full chapter has been given for antiphospholipid antibodies covering all aspects during pregnancy but it is surprising that systemic lupus erythematosus is not discussed well in spite of its problems in pregnancy.

The book will be good for both obstetricians and internists alike.

M. ANIS SHARF FRCP Ed
*Consultant Physician,
 Department of Medicine,
 Riyadh Armed Forces Hospital,
 PO Box 7897, Riyadh 11159, Saudi Arabia*

Debates in Medicine

Edited by G. Gitnick, H. Verdain Barnes,

R. P. Lewis, T. P. Duffy, R. H. Winterbaner

343 pp. £44.00

Wolfe Publishing Limited, London

Mosby—Year Book, St Louis, USA, 1991

ISBN 0-8151-3603-X

This ten-chapter volume is written by distinguished authors and analyses controversial but rather interesting issues. Each of these is hotly debated by two contributors, one affirmative and the other negative; with valuable conclusive remarks by the chapter editor. The majority of chapters cover gastroenterology but disciplines like cardiology, pulmonology, critical care and endocrinology are well represented.

The book tackles stress-related upper gastrointestinal mucosal damage in critically ill patients and the susceptibility of these patients to nosocomial pneumonia due to alteration in gastric pH and gastrokinetics. Pharmacotherapy regimens currently implemented are criticized and advantages of cytoprotectives are discussed as are certain risk factors associated with significant mucosal haemorrhage and mortality rates among those who bleed vary widely.

The natural history of colonic polyps in the over 50s is determined by many variables that ultimately modify the management. The logistic considerations are reviewed as well; e.g. should we get technicians to endoscope under supervision of endoscopists?

Evidence is now available to support a role for bacteria and their products in the pathogenesis of Crohn's disease. Yet the routine use of antibiotics in this disorder is questioned and the recommendation made that the use of metronidazole, in particular, should be more rational.

Some additional debates covered are: 1) It is too early to evaluate use of ESWL in treatment of gallstones but considering its success in urinary calculi, this treatment option may prove desirable; 2) The benefit of methylxanthine derivatives in chronic obstructive airways disease is subjective and difficult to quantify. Recent theories on pathogenesis of asthma, for instance, suggest an inflammatory element and these agents lack an anti-inflammatory effect. They remain an adjunct therapy with narrow therapeutic indices; 3) ACE inhibitors have reduced mortality in severe forms of congestive heart failure but evidence for this is lacking in milder forms. Important trials addressing this question are underway; 4) The use of invasive but specific electrophysiology studies in investigating syncope in cardiovascular disease patients is argued to be limited to a highly selected group of patients; 5) A recent rise in the incidence of adult non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus is dramatic and treatment should aim at reducing excess body weight hence lowering insulin plasma levels and insulin resistance. Although this is achievable by a combination of diet and drug treatment, it is claimed that a team-administered diet programme alone should suffice.

These controversial debates, should appeal to both specialist and generalist physicians and it is hoped that they will assist the reader to reach his own verdict.

A. M. AHMED MRCP
*Senior Registrar,
 Division of Gastroenterology,
 Riyadh Armed Forces Hospital,
 PO Box 7897, Riyadh 11159,
 Saudi Arabia*

Peripheral Vascular Diseases *

J. R. Young, R. A. Graor, J. W. Olin,

J. R. Bartholomew

Mosby—Year Book, St Louis, USA, 1991

790 pp. £69.00

ISBN 0-8016-6115-3

There is no doubt that peripheral vascular disease is a very important cause of death and morbidity all over the globe. With the ageing of populations particularly in Western countries and even in some developing countries like ours, more and more patients are seen suffering from vascular diseases. The field of vascular biology, medicine, and surgery is rapidly expanding. However, knowledge about this common problem is still not sufficient for physicians dealing with vascular patients such as internists, family physicians, cardiologists, radiologists, surgeons (vascular, general, plastic) and paediatrists. This book is intended to help all of these practitioners.

Book Reviews

The first part is initiated with a brief review of the clinical clues to peripheral vascular disease followed by physical examination and non-invasive vascular laboratory procedures. The chapters about coagulation, fibrinolysis and interventional treatment are brief, informative and updated. As this book was not intended for vascular surgeons only, the next two parts cover arterial and venous disorders in a very general but comprehensive fashion concentrating on common problems including those which are more related to the medical field such as hypertension, systemic vasculitis, etc. I find that Part IV of the book about lymphoedema was not as useful due to the depressing prognosis of this unsolved problem.

The last part of the book is very readable and covers nicely some diverse practical subjects of utmost clinical importance to undergraduate as well as postgraduate medical students.

This book is fairly concise, well written and presents updated comprehensive reviews of common peripheral vascular diseases. It is well supported with figures and tables. Certainly, it is a highly valuable book which is recommended to all physicians including those who are not surgical specialists who deal with vascular patients.

HASAN AL ZAHRANI FRCS (Glasg)

*Assistant Professor, Consultant Vascular Surgeon,
King Abdulziz University Hospital,
PO Box 6615, Jeddah 21452, Saudi Arabia*