
Book Reviews

Lecture Notes on Infectious Diseases, 5th edition. Ed. B. K. Mandal. Blackwell Scientific Inc. 1996. £14.95. ISBN 0 632 03351 7.

The fifth edition of this popular handbook differs considerably from its predecessors, in that it is now system rather than microorganism based. This makes it more user friendly for the busy clinicians (mainly junior hospital doctors) for whom it is intended. After an introduction and general chapters on immunizations, chemotherapy, hospital acquired infection and pyrexia of unknown origin, there are chapters on infections of various organ systems: respiratory tract (upper and lower), cardiovascular, neurological, dermatological, gastrointestinal, genitourinary and musculoskeletal. There follow chapters on infections in the immunocompromised and in neonates, and a section on zoonoses, tropical diseases and helminths. The original authors have taken on two colleagues (Drs Wilkins and Dunbar) to help them with this radically revised fifth edition.

In common with other books in the 'Lecture Notes' series, this book is intended as a 'vade mecum' for doctors practising in busy hospitals. It is therefore inevitably dogmatic, and has no references or bibliography. Fortunately, it is in general clearly written, up to date and accurate. However, frustratingly for the harassed house officer, it is short on detail of treatment regimens, which will have to be looked up in another book. On the other hand, it is strong on lists, and will appeal to the busy MRCP candidate because these lists are relevant, clear and not too long, focusing on the important differential diagnoses and diagnostic methods. There are 3 pages of colour prints, comprising 8 clinical pictures, 2 blood films, a black urine, and an electron micrograph; clearly, the MRCP candidate would do well also to invest in, or at least borrow one of the many excellent colour atlases of infectious/tropical diseases in addition to this useful and reasonably priced volume.

D. MABEY

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Atlas of Infectious Diseases Vol. VIII: External Manifestations of Systemic Infections. Editor-in-Chief: G. L. Mandell; ed. R. Fekety. Churchill Livingstone 1996. £95.00.

Volume VIII of the *Atlas of Infectious Diseases*, which is devoted to the external manifestations of systemic infec-

tions, is well up to the excellent standard set by its predecessors, combining as it does beautifully reproduced clinical illustrations with an up to date commentary and eye-catching graphics. It is informative to read and a pleasure to dip into.

There are 13 chapters, starting with the viral exanthems of childhood, and moving through infective endocarditis and sepsis and bacteraemia to specific infections including streptococcal and staphylococcal infections, Lyme and other tick-borne diseases (ehrlichiosis and babesiosis), bartonella infections, leprosy, viral haemorrhagic fevers, systemic fungal infections, protozoal and helminthic diseases, and finally cutaneous manifestations of infection in the immunocompromised host.

The standard is uniformly excellent, although some chapters clearly lend themselves better than others to graphical representation. The final chapter, in particular, contains a lot of lists – albeit nicely presented and easy to read lists. The text and references are absolutely up to date, with several from 1996, and the section on hantavirus pulmonary syndrome in particular is a state of the art summary of current knowledge.

This series has a very American flavour, which is not surprising since it is written exclusively by Americans, but I was disappointed that the chapter on parasitic diseases was confined to the manifestations of these diseases in Latin America. On the other hand, the chapter on leprosy is comprehensive and beautifully illustrated, with pictures of patients from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds; and the chapter on bacterial endocarditis is full of the most florid clinical signs (Osler's nodes, Janeway lesions and Roth's spots) that have hardly been seen in the UK since the antibiotic era, but persist in the IV drug using populations of inner city North America.

D. MABEY

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Atlas of Infectious Diseases Vol. VII: Intra-abdominal infections, Hepatitis, and Gastroenteritis. Editor in Chief; G. L. Mandell; ed. B. Lorber. Pp. 500. Churchill Livingstone 1996. £95.00. ISBN 0 443077304.

My first thought on seeing the title of volume VII of the *Atlas of Infectious Diseases* was that these subjects lent themselves less well to the illustrated approach than others in the series, e.g. sexually transmitted diseases, or the external manifestations of infectious diseases. After glancing

through the book I began to feel I may have been wrong; and having now read it more carefully, I am convinced that I was.

This is a magnificent book. Those of you who have read my reviews of previous volumes in this series may by now feel that my vocabulary consists only of superlatives. If you doubt my assessment of volume VII, please look at chapter 2, on hepatitis. This is 54 pages long. It starts with the virology of hepatitides A–G, summarized in a simple figure; if ever a picture was worth 1000 words, as I can remember being told in the Cadet Training Corps, then this is it. The epidemiology of these viruses is illustrated by maps of the world, serology is explained clearly with graphs showing the time course of the various responses, clinical and epidemiological features, and prophylactic recommendations are given in tables of admirable clarity, and all the relevant information is summarized in a diagnostic algorithm. Even the molecular biology is presented clearly and in diagram form.

There follows 35 pages of liver histology. I can remember as a student finding histology the most boring part of the medial curriculum. If we had had books like this, it could have been the most exciting. This section is a tour de force. Nothing is omitted. In addition to covering every aspect of viral hepatitis, not forgetting yellow fever, it includes all the bacterial causes from *Treponema pallidum* to *Listeria monocytogenes*, mycobacterial infections (including leprosy), and parasitic infections; echinococcosis, schistosomiasis and amoebiasis, obviously, but also visceral larva migrans, pneumocystosis and capillariasis. Finally, the deep mycoses are comprehensively covered. The histological pictures are of the highest quality, and the accompanying text concise and memorable.

Other chapters cover intra-abdominal infections and abscesses, bacterial, viral, fungal and parasitic enteritis, *Helicobacter pylori* infection, and diagnostic imaging. The first chapter contains an important section, which should be compulsory reading for all surgeons, on the correct way to collect samples for microbiology at operation. Every chapter is clear, accurate, up to date and well referenced; and the illustrations are all of an exceptionally high standard. I have only one minor criticism. Some irritating errors have crept into some of the legends to the figures; e.g. we read of *Shigella typhi*, and a picture of a colostomy is described as an endoscopic view of the colonic mucosa. It is a pity that

the proof readers have not done justice to an otherwise superb volume.

D. MABEY

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Genital and Neonatal Herpes. Ed. Lawrence R. Stanberry. Pp. 244. John Wiley & Sons. £50.00. ISBN 0 471 96713 0.

Genital herpes has been recognized as a disease entity since 1736, as a sexually transmitted disease since around 1900, and as a viral disease (caused mainly by herpes simplex virus [HSV]-2) since the 1960s. The 1960s and 1970s saw an epidemic rise in genital herpes infections in the USA which has been eclipsed recently by the AIDS epidemic. But genital HSV infection is still on the rise, and with it the ever present threat of serious or fatal neonatal infection. So the time is right for a comprehensive book on the subject, and Lawrence R. Stanberry has provided it. The foreword of the book claims that it is a definitive and scholarly work on genital and neonatal herpes, and indeed it is. This small (244 page) volume with its 17 contributors (all from the USA) tells the reader all that they could reasonably want to know about the subject.

Each chapter is on a separate topic (each written by a recognized expert in the field), and takes the reader logically through virology, pathogenesis, immunology, epidemiology, diagnosis and treatment. Each subject is covered from both the scientific and clinical angles and well referenced throughout so that the complete picture is conveyed with commendable clarity.

So who will be the audience for this scholarly work? That is a difficult question to answer. Obviously a small band of research students and academic clinicians in the fields of genitourinary medicine, neonatal paediatrics and infectious diseases will benefit from the work. But, given the short shelf life of a work of this sort at the cutting edge of a fast moving field, and the prohibitive cost of £50, I imagine that it will be mostly found on the shelves of medical school libraries over the next few years.

D. H. CRAWFORD

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine