BOOK REVIEWS

Accident and Emergency Medicine

By D. H. WILSON & MICHAEL W. FLOWERS

Butterworths, London. 1985. 256 pp. £13.95.

Accident and Emergency Handbook is the direct descendent of Morris Ellis' *The Casualty Officers Handbook* and is a short, practical guide for the future senior house officer in accident and emergency.

Its main strength is as an introductory book to be read by the senior house officer before he actually takes up his post, because it guides the reader into not only how to cope with specific problems but also how to generally work in the department. Perhaps, in places, it spends too much time on this introduction, because what is required, once the doctor has taken up his post, is a reference book to which he can quickly refer with ease in the middle of the night.

The main problem with this book is that it does not adequately cover the medical, as opposed to surgical, spectrum of the work. In particular, the advice on cardio-pulmonary resuscitation is both out of date and inadequate. All new doctors in accident and emergency departments need to be referred to the Resuscitation Council's guidelines which have recently been described in detail in the *British Medical Journal*. Further, it does not adequately cover how to cope with the various arrhythmias which are met with in the accident and emergency department. There is no escape from the necessity of discussing the basic details of the common changes in electrocardiograms. There is also an inadequate description on how to cope with the very common problem of chest pain query cause.

The chapters on injuries do give adequate and appropriate guidelines, remembering that what is pertinent is the immediate care, not the on-going management.

In summary, this book is to be recommended to be read by doctors going to take up a post in the accident and emergency department but does have its inadequacies as a handbook, pocket or otherwise.

Robin Touquet
Accident and Emergency Department
St Mary's Hospital
London
England

Mosby's Comprehensive View of Critical Care, Third Edition

Edited by DONNA A. ZSCHOCHÉ. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford. 1986. 1000 pp. £30.50.

This book is the third edition of what is described as a 'multiple organ approach to