BOOK REVIEWS

Lecture Notes on Accident and Emergency Medicine

D. W. YATES & A. D. REDMOND

Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford. 1985. 406 pp. £9.80.

There is little doubt that this book will justly become the definitive text for junior- and middle-grade doctors working in accident and emergency departments within the United Kingdom. The title is a little misleading since accident and emergency medicine is, as yet, sadly under-represented in the undergraduate curriculum, and other titles within the series are primarily aimed at medical students.

There are a number of excellent points about the book. It is well printed, clearly laid out and easy to use, while just fitting into a white-coat pocket. It assembles a vast amount of clearly-presented information and sensible advice about the majority of conditions that casualty officers in our departments will see on a daily basis. In particular, the sections on the resuscitation of patients with multiple injuries and cardiac arrest are masterpieces of clarity and state of the art knowledge. In addition to outlining the management of so many conditions, it rightly emphasises the limits of investigation and care for such patients within accident and emergency departments. Indeed, the whole book reflects the experience, enthusiasm and commonsense of the authors.

Criticisms are few; however, the cover of the book can at best be described as unexciting, and the reproduction and content of many of the lined drawings requires reappraisal. It is disappointing to see that there are no ECG traces and there are a number of small irritating spelling mistakes, e.g. albumen. Since the AIDS epidemic is already lapping at the shore of our departments, it is also disappointing to see that the condition is not mentioned, and, in general, the index is perhaps not as complete or as well structured as it might be.

These minor criticisms apart, this book firmly places accident and emergency medicine on sound scientific principles and emphasises the academic base upon which the speciality must progress. It will be required reading for all junior- and middle-grade staff in our departments, while also fulfilling many of the needs for the FRCS (A&E) hurdle. The authors are to be congratulated on their achievement.

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