

work represents a viewpoint of past practices and has, at best, only historical interest.

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**Current Therapy of Respiratory Disease—2**, ed by Reuben M. Cherniak, St. Louis, CV Mosby, 1984, 332 pp, price not given.

This book provides current and detailed information regarding the management and therapy of pulmonary diseases. The volume is not intended to cover pathophysiology or differential diagnoses, although brief discussions of these topics are sometimes included if they have direct therapeutic implications.

This second edition appears only two years after the first and includes an almost completely new group of authors, thus providing a fresh perspective. The contributors are generally recognized as experts and convey reliable, although occasionally somewhat personalized, therapeutic approaches. Chapters new to this edition include those dealing with sleep apnea, sleep disordered breathing, diagnostic techniques, and eosinophilic pneumonitis. Also new to this edition is the inclusion of a short list of references following each chapter. This addition enhances the usefulness of the book, although the authors' use of this reading list is inconsistent. Whereas most contributors cite articles which deal with complex aspects of therapy (in keeping with the intended emphasis of this volume), other authors cite more general information.

Several different chapters discuss aspects of commonly used medications (e.g., corticosteroids, theophylline preparations). This causes some unnecessary repetition which might be prevented if future editions allocated separate chapters for the major and frequently utilized classes of pharmacologic agents used in respiratory medicine.

Overall, *Current Therapy of Respiratory Medicine* is an excellent reference source for residents or pulmonary fellows. Experienced practitioners will have less need to consult this book, but will find it useful for the management of infrequently encountered disorders.

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**Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System**, 7th ed, by Sheila Sherlock, Oxford, Blackwell Scientific, 1985, 578 pp, \$66.50.

This is the seventh edition of a work first done by

the same author in 1955. Thus, *Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System* has virtually spanned the career of the most famous hepatologist in the world—Sheila Sherlock, who has recently retired as the head of the renowned liver unit at the Royal Free Hospital in London. The preface points out that the production of this latest work was a “drastic pruning of outmoded views and ruthless elimination of old references to make way for the new material.” Thus, the same brevity is apparent as in the first edition. References are current; many are of articles published in the same year as this book.

Each of the 33 chapters is a model of incisive, pithy, and occasionally witty writing. The first six are devoted to fundamental concepts of modern hepatology, including anatomy, liver function, needle biopsy, hematologic considerations, and imaging. The next six deal with complications of liver disease, such as hepatic failure, encephalopathy, and ascites. The remainder of the book is devoted to a consideration of specific groups of liver diseases. An up-to-date chapter about liver transplantation is also provided. The quality of the drawings, graphs, and charts is excellent. Most of the radiologic images demonstrate the point of discussion quite well, although the reader not well-versed in radiology may wish for an increased use of arrows or other markers to demonstrate precisely the features being displayed.

In a book of this relatively small size, it is delightful to see that almost everything of importance in clinical hepatology is at least mentioned. A full discussion of major areas of interest is given with consummate authority. The chapters dealing with viral hepatitis and chronic active hepatitis, for example, are outstanding for their completeness and relevance. The former includes all of the traditional information about viral hepatitis, including a discussion of the newly discovered delta hepatitis. The latter gives a full discussion of therapeutic options, including the possibility that viral B chronic active hepatitis with an antibody to the e antigen may be treated successfully with corticosteroids.

By design, issues which are controversial did not receive a full discussion. For example, most of the discussion of the pathogenesis of ascites centers around relative intravascular contraction, but insufficient attention is paid to many other studies suggesting that most if not all blood spaces in cirrhotics are actually normal or overfilled. Similarly, the book suggests that a low ascitic fluid pH may be an early indicator of the presence of spontaneous bacterial peritonitis, but no mention is made of subsequent opposing studies.

*Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System* is of the highest production quality, exquisitely written, and refined by the leading figure in hepatology. Anyone considering the purchase of a hepatology textbook should certainly have this one. Medical students, general practitioners, gastroenterologists, and hepatolo-