BOOK REVIEWS

DRUG INTERACTION IN ANAESTHESIA. N. TY SMITH, RONALD D. MILLER & ALDO N. CORBASCIO. Philadelphia, Lea & Febiger, 1981. Price: \$27.50 U.S.

THIS BOOK takes the term "Drug interaction" in its broadest sense and emphasizes that there are both useful and harmful interactions and that modern anaesthetic practice is based on the rational utilisation of the former. Wherever it is pertinent, each chapter contains several case histories to exemplify particular drug interactions and these are generally helpful to the reader. It is inevitable that there is much basic pharmacology and physiology throughout. This is to the credit of the authors for otherwise the text would read like a recipe or cook-book. Instead of so dull and pedestrian an approach the reader is generally seduced to read the entire chapter as much for interest as for information. It is, alas, also probably inevitable but still regrettable that the chapters are generally longer than they need to be. This is a hazard with all many-authored texts and the modern reader has come, more or less, to expect it. In this and other more positive respects he will not be disappointed in this latest addition to the bookshelf of the practising anaesthetist; for this is not a text just "for the Anaesthetic Department Library" as so many otherwise laudatory reviews inevitably conclude.

KENNETH M. LEIGHTON

DIAGNOSIS AND NONSURGICAL MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC PAIN. NELSON HENDLER. New York, Raven Press Medical and Scientific Publishers, 1981. Price: \$28.50 U.S.

CHRONIC PAIN is a complex phenomenon encompassing anatomical, physiological, psychological, psycho-social and environmental factors. Hence no single individual is capable of presenting a comprehensive picture of the subject. Dr. Hendler's Book is slanted heavily towards the psychological and psychiatric aspects of chronic pain and in that sense the title of the book is somewhat misleading since there do exist other nonsurgical modalities of pain treatment which receive scant attention in this book. However, the psychological aspects of pain are treat-

ed comprehensively and in a language which the average physician can understand. The chapter on the psychopharmacology of chronic pain is particularly good and informative. If one had one criticism to make, it might be that the author leans rather heavily on his experiences in an in-patient treatment centre. Few pain management services enjoy the luxury of a 14-bed unit and must content themselves with a far smaller number of beds dispersed throughout the hospital wherever they can be found. This has major implications on the team aspect, particularly from a nursing point-of-view. Nevertheless this book is exceptionally informative within its particular field of interest and is recommended as reading not only for those involved in pain management clinics, but also to those in the wider medical community who wish to get a deeper understanding of the ramifications of chronic pain and thus improve the clinical management of these patients.

GORDON M. WYANT

ENDOCRINOLOGY IN ANAESTHESIA AND SURGERY. H. STOECKEL & T. OYAMA. Berlin, Springer-Verlag, 1981. Price: \$55.50 U.S.

THIS BOOK provides a useful collection of a wide range of information on the general topic of endocrinology in anaesthesia and surgery. Part of the series "Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care Medicine" the individual chapters follow presentations made at the First International Symposium on Endocrinology in Anaesthesia & Surgery which was held in Bonn in September 1978.

The presentations are grouped in three areas:

1. Basic problems of endocrinology in anaesthesia and surgery.
2. The response of the endocrine system to anaesthesia and surgery.
3. Hormone and anaesthetic management of endocrine disease.

As the Editors themselves note in the preface, there is both repetition and diversity in the presentation. If this text were identified clearly as the proceedings of the 1978 Symposium, the repetition would be less of a surprise and irritation to the reader. Except for the comments in the preface, the general presentation of this text

gives no clue that it is really the proceedings of the Symposium.

If it was the publisher's and editors' intention to present information in the format of a report on the 1978 Symposium, they have succeeded. If however they intended to convert this information into a current text book in the area of

endocrinology in anaesthesia and surgery, they have failed. Both the nature and contents of this text and its relatively high price (U.S. \$55) for a soft covered edition will, in my view, make this publication of interest only as a reference source.

DOUGLAS B. CRAIG