

**Imaging endocrine disorders.** Clinical endocrinology and metabolism — International practice and research, May 1989. Vol 3, Number 1. (pp 228, figs. £18.50). London: Baillière Tindall, 1989.

This small book contains an almost totally comprehensive review of modern imaging techniques in endocrinology. The editors point out in their foreword that the chapter on parathyroid disorders is sadly missing due to death of the planned contributor. The inclusion of a chapter on techniques for the measurement of bone mineral is particularly relevant at this time.

Editorial control has resulted in a work without the problems found in some multi-authors' books. The authors give precise guidance regarding the use and accuracy of existing imaging techniques. The relative merits of ultrasound, scintigraphy, CT and MRI are clearly expounded and the indications for invasive and international radiological techniques such as angiography, venous sampling and embolisation cogently explained. A mild caveat might be entered on the quality of some of the illustrations: the majority are of excellent quality.

This volume can be highly recommended to all doctors dealing with patients presenting with endocrine problems and should be compulsory reading for all radiologists.

EM McILRATH

**Antimicrobial chemotherapy.** (Second edition). Edited by David Greenwood. (pp 372, illus. £20.00, hardback). Oxford: Oxford Medical Publications, 1989.

This is a very interesting book. It is not a formal textbook of microbiology, but focuses instead on the practical treatment of microbial infections. Enough detail of biochemistry is included to enable the reader to understand the mode of action of anti-microbial agents. In a volume of modest proportions, it is perhaps understandable that there is not room for great detail. Instead, the book attempts to cover the whole scope of human infections, which it does quite successfully. Although there are several authors, a uniform and highly readable style is maintained.

The advice given is excellent, and the logic behind treatment choices clearly explained. This new edition is also commendably up-to-date, with appropriate mention of new treatments, and new diseases, such as AIDS. I am sure it will continue to appeal to a wide readership, including pharmacists, laboratory and nursing staff as well as medical students and junior doctors. If I have any reservations, they are minor ones. Despite the explanation given in the introduction, I still feel that a guide to dosing should be given — although practice may vary, one of the purposes of such a book should be to provide sensible guidelines. Finally, the price may deter students from buying their own copy, but it is now available in paperback rather cheaper.

P NICHOLL

**Robert Graves: The Golden Years of Irish Medicine.** By Selwyn Taylor. Eponymists in Medicine series. (pp 160. £7.50). London: Royal Society of Medicine Services, 1989.

This is a labour of love and academic affection. Mr Selwyn Taylor is a distinguished academic thyroid surgeon and lately Dean of the Royal Postgraduate Medical School. He has spent his holidays searching for traces of his eponymous hero, and has uncovered many hitherto unrecorded facts. That the trail runs dry in places is not due to lack of diligence, but to the deliberate destruction of family records.

The book is aimed at the general medical reader: Mr Selwyn Taylor attempts to set the scene of Dublin medicine at its apogee and Robert Graves was one of its brightest stars. He has uncovered other Graves' relations still living in ancestral houses in England whose connection antedates Cromwell. He has talked to Graves' great-grandson, living in a remote castle in south east Ireland and has been introduced to all the fascination of Irish genealogical exploration — the cross references and the missing chapters included.

He has provided a useful and accurate assessment of Graves' place in Dublin medicine, and particularly of his magnum opus, "A System of Clinical Medicine" published in 1843. In this work he laid down the basis of his experience in the diagnosis and treatment of fevers and on the spread of epidemics. In the 1846 famine his disagreement with Corrigan as to cause and effect of fever and famine became a medical cause célèbre. Selwyn Taylor points to evidence of looming depression and illness in his hero at that time.

Graves' disease represents a very small section of his clinical observations and the eponymous honour was bestowed by his friend Trousseau, Professor of Medicine in Paris. Thyroidologists will read the book for this section, but we will be much more rewarded by a fascinating glimpse into early Victorian Dublin medicine. There is no record that Graves ever came to Belfast.

DR HADDEN