followed by an analysis of structure and then of function. Some of this material has been published previously in the *Annals* and formed the substance of the author's MD thesis.

Part 4 is on applied instrumentation and, for example, deals with haemorrhage, wound closure, extraction of foreign materials and amputation. This section contains much of general surgical interest and for the occasional reader may be of greater interest than some of the more specialised earlier chapters.

The book is lavishly illustrated throughout with more than 500 black-and-white line drawings and photographs. There is also a central section of 30 colour plates showing boxed collections of 19th-century instruments and plates from illustrated surgical manuscripts and books of the past. Each chapter is extensively referenced. To conclude, there is a comprehensive bibliography and a useful appendix detailing museums and collections throughout the world that exhibit surgical instruments.

Are there any criticisms? I could find only one error during a detailed reading and that relates to an illustration rather than the text! Plate III is incorrectly labelled. Beyond this I found some of the illustrations disappointingly small given the detail they contain and a few have reproduced poorly.

Overall, however, I believe this to be a unique reference volume that will be consulted for many years to come by those who wish to understand how the developing craft of surgery necessitated developments in instrument design and, conversely, how serial advances in materials technology allowed developments to take place in the craft of surgery. It will also be of special interest to instrument collectors and medical historians.

Recent Advances in Surgery 29

COLIN JOHNSON, IRVING TAYLOR

EXTENT P/H	240 pages, Paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£35.00, 1853156922
PUBLISHER	RSM (London), 2006
REVIEWER	Dominic Slade
STAR RATING	****

Recent Advances in Surgery is a well-established series from the Royal Society of Medicine Press, masterfully edited by Colin Johnson and Irving Taylor. It is updated annually and attempts to review trends in current practice and advances within the surgical specialties. In recent years, it has adopted a standard format with sections of one to five chapters devoted to the generality of surgery. In this edition, there are sections for surgery in general, liver and pancreatic surgery, vascular surgery, breast disease and a final chapter that summarises the leading randomised clinical trials from the preceding year. Every chapter contains boxes highlighting key points for clinical practice, which are summarised neatly before the reference section.

This year's offering has an especially diverse range of topics drawn from 34 separate authors comprising renowned experts in their field, practising consultant surgeons, registrars and SHOs. The book contains largely black-and-white illustrations although the chapter on gynaecomastia has a number of colour plates within it. There are a considerable number of pertinent radiographic images as well as a few line drawings.

Within the section on general surgery there is a review of paediatric surgery in the district general hospital. This serves as both a concise summary of the commonly encountered conditions as well as a guide to the management of children outside a specialist centre. There follows an excellent update on pre-operative cardiac assessment and optimisation, an in-depth review of angiogenesis and its relevance to neoplasia and a concise summary of sickle cell disease as it relates to surgical practice. Superb updates are provided in the chapters on fast-track surgery, radiofrequency and thermal ablation of tumours and live-donor liver transplantation. I particularly enjoyed the sections on pancreatic, liver and splenic trauma clearly written by surgeons with a life-time's experience in the field. I also found the review of severe acute pancreatitis superbly structured, reasoned and crisply written.

New technologies in vascular surgery are explored including the minimally invasive management of pseudo-aneurysms and endovenous laser therapy. As always, the randomised clinical trials section brings one up to date with studies that may influence general surgical practice and makes an excellent starting point for further reading.

The *Recent Advances* series has always been championed as excellent revision material for surgical examinations and this particular volume covers a very diverse field indeed within which every potential candidate should find sections of relevance. For those wishing to broaden their understanding and to be brought up to date with key advances in surgery in general, this book is for them.

Churchill's Pocketbook of Surgery (3rd edn)

ANDREW RAFTERY, MICHAEL DELBRIDGE

EXTENT P/H	632 pages, Paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£19.99, 0443102740
PUBLISHER	Churchill Livingstone (London), 2006
REVIEWER	John Winstanley
STAR RATING	****

This is the third edition of what has in the past proved a popular book as evidenced by the publisher's commercial confidence in going to a further edition. The authors' aim as stated in the preface is to produce a concise, didactic account of the common surgical disorders that is both affordable and fits in the pocket, although not many