Mastery of Surgery. Third edition. Edited by Nyhus LM, Baker RJ, Fischer JE. Publisher: Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1997. Two Volume Set. Price Rs 6,000/- ISBN 0-316-617466-2.

The third edition of the book maintains the high standards set in the previous two editions. The book highlights the cornerstone of surgery: technical skills that must be mastered. The scope however, is much beyond that of a surgical atlas which simply depicts the steps of an operation. A wide range of surgical procedures are detailed in such a way as to show the reader how to improve the performance of operations by emphasizing refinements in technique.

The book comprises 201 chapters contributed by authorities in their respective fields. Though the overall emphasis is on technical aspects, the first section (11 chapters) deals with physiologic considerations and perioperative care while, the second section emphasizes the basic skills and technology in surgical practice. The topics on electrocautery, intraoperative ultrasound and GI endoscopy, rarely found in a surgical manual, have been dealt with extremely well in this section.

A detailed overview of essential surgical anatomy precedes practically every major topic. Almost all chapters are superbly illustrated and make excellent reading. In the present era of minimal invasive surgery, laparoscopic surgical techniques have been dealt with in detail. A unique feature of the book is the editorial comments at the end of each chapter. These comments are

not always complimentary and bring into sharp focus to the young surgeon the fact that every statement is no inviolate and careful appraisal of all that one reads is necessary. These observations also bring out some important facts that may have been missed by the contributing author and occasionally present a different way to solve the problem.

However, there are some notable omissions in the text. The chapter on plastic surgery does not describe the technique of skin grafting, the deltopectoral, forehead and other useful flaps routinely employed by practising surgeons. Similarly, the description of the technique of performing burr-holes/craniotomy for head injuries is mandatory in a book which has following claim: "particularly appeals to the surgeon who does not practice in major urban setting and, therefore, cannot readily refer patients to subspecialists".

Despite these few omissions, this outstanding book is thoroughly enjoyable both in its form and scientific content. This masterpiece is a must for all libraries, and notwithstanding its price, strongly recommended as a personal copy for the surgical residents as well as the young surgeons who seriously aspire to master the art and craft of surgery.

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Forensic Medicine and Toxicology 2nd edition. Edited by JB Mukherjee. Published by Arnold Associates, New Delhi 1994. Paper back. Rs. 250/-. Pages 546. ISBN 81-7031-235-3.

This book of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology is text book which adequately caters for both undergraduate and post graduate students. This is a referral book with explanatory details. This edition introduces recent trends and new innovations in the discipline such as computerized Super imposition technique, AK 47 Rifle, ultra sonic radiation method for detection of diatoms and medico

legal aspects of patient care. The book contains illustrations of practical experience of author who had 40 years association in the discipline. In essence, this is an ideal book both to a student and the master, the novice and expert equally.

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