Book reviews

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REVIEWS

ENDODONTIC SCIENCE

C. Estrela

UK: Scion Publishing

price £195.00; pp 1,104

ISBN 9788536700830

This beautifully presented two-volume text aims to provide an in-depth and up-to-date summary of the science of endodontics. This aim has certainly been achieved. It is nothing if not comprehensive, with levels of detail to satisfy even the most knowledge-hungry.

As one can infer from the title, the writing is mainly in scientific style and the sheer weight of information can make it heavy going in some areas. Indeed, many of the chapters are so comprehensive they could be re-published as literature reviews in their own right. Fortunately, there are hundreds of high quality clinical photos, radiographs and diagrams to break up the text. Since the book has many co-authors it would be all too easy for them each to cram the text with clinical photos of their career-best cases but this temptation is largely avoided. It is often from mistakes which lessons are learned. The chapter on cone beam CT scanning in endodontics warrants a special mention, as does the separate chapter on healing of endodontic lesions, something often not described in detail in other endodontic texts. That said, no book is perfect and this does have some drawbacks. There is a tug-of-war between a thorough scientific approach and more practical, clinically based approach in many chapters. Some strike the balance perfectly, such as the chapter on nickel titanium instruments. Having read this chapter any practitioner could appraise the various systems involved, choose

one and understand how that system can influence the preparation, obturation and outcome. However, the chapter on root canal filling and coronal seal contains less detailed clinical information and would need to be supplemented with additional pictures and description of clinical technique for a truly comprehensive clinical and scientific summary. There is also no separate chapter on paediatric endodontics and the inexplicable absence of diagrammatic occlusal views showing the position of root canal entrances in the chapter on access cavity preparation is a disappointing omission. The only other drawback is the price. With the new edition of *Pathways of the pulp*, this book's major competitor, being available at less than half that amount some may feel this book is a little too expensive. On the whole though, it is a truly excellent and up-to-the-minute scientific endodontic text.

S. Critchlow

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TOM BROWN, VICTORIAN MIDDLESBOROUGH DENTIST

T. Brown

UK: Country Books

Available from Teeside
Hospice Trading Ltd,
telephone 01642 355866

price £12.50; pp 124

ISBN 9781906789237

The author of this book is the third generation of dentists in the North East of England. He has meticulously researched his family background to produce this book which provides a fascinating account of not just dentistry in the early part of the

twentieth century, but also the life of a professional person.

Tom Brown was quite an amazing clinician whose clinical domain was mainly based upon extractions and the provision of dentures for those who could afford them. He was for the most part of his practising life a single-handed dentist in the truest sense of the word. His practice was at times, peripatetic, often visiting patients in their homes and carrying out extractions under 'general anaesthesia'. In such instances, the patient's general medical practitioner provided the anaesthetic whilst Tom completed the extractions. The next remarkable stage is that Tom himself then made the dentures in his workshop in whatever time he could make available. This summarises the true apprentice nature of his training.

Shortly after the First World War, Tom opened up his own practice at 41 Parliament Road, Middlesbrough, an area of town that provided dental care until the last owner (Tom's grandson, the author) retired in 2004. Soon after launching his practice, the 1921 Dentists Act came into force and Tom was required to register with the Dental Board of the UK. Tom retired from dental practice just before the outbreak of the Second World War, but he lived to see the introduction of the National Health Service and also ensured that his son (Tom Jun) and grandson Tony had a legacy to continue with the family tradition.

This is a delightful book, full of anecdote, character and very well researched. It provides an excellent insight into how dentistry was practised all those years ago and how such practices have changed.

I have enjoyed reading this book and I hope others do so as well.

R. Seymour