that help patients to cope with their disease, and books that the patients can consult to understand it. The danger in attempting to produce a book of such magnitude is the creation of a tedious morass that a reader must wade through to find the useful facts, but the contributors to this book fall into this pitfall only occasionally.

On the whole, I found this handbook to be well written, well referenced, and interesting. Dr. Koller's text offers the clinician current useful information about the disease and gives the researcher a comprehensive review of the progress other disciplines have made to understand and treat Parkinson's disease.

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Reoperative Vascular Surgery. Edited by Hugh H. Trout III, Joseph M. Giordano, and Ralph G. DePalma. New York, Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1987. 376 pp. $89.00.

Reoperative Vascular Surgery represents the latest entry in the series of texts from Marcel Dekker on the "Science and Practice of Surgery." This series, of which a number of earlier volumes have been reviewed in this journal, has proven to be a consistently high-quality collection of surgical specialty texts. It is my pleasure (and surprise) to find that the overall success of the series still has not been phased throughout the variety of subject matters entertained.

Reoperative vascular operations are increasingly being performed. As cited by the authors, numerous reasons exist for this growth and include longer life span of patients with vascular disease, an increased number of primary procedures being performed, and a more aggressive attitude toward limb salvage with revascularization procedures than was previously deemed possible. Even to the finest of vascular surgeons, these procedures represent multiple technical difficulties, with excessive scar formation, decreased number of graft options, as autologous veins are commonly unavailable, and the frequently emergent nature of these procedures.

This book is a multi-authored text from surgeons around the country, with each chapter of the text representing one major vascular reoperative procedure. With few exceptions, each chapter includes a review of published success rates of the reoperative procedure, indications for the operation, and the chapter author's own personal technical preferences for the procedure. Due to the frequently poor clinical literature on many of the procedures, some of the chapters are slim on data and rich on anecdotal opinions of the procedure. As this practice is a characteristic (not necessarily a weakness) of surgical literature in general, it is to be expected and does not detract much from the overall quality of the text.

A few chapters deserve special discussion. The Cleveland Clinic group has reviewed their well-known data on cardiac bypass procedures in patients undergoing peripheral vascular surgery; this group's data is probably the most comprehensive examination of that problem, and the review is certainly a high point of the text. As a primer to the management of graft infections, fistulas, and aneurysms, Trout's chapter is readable, complete, and should be recommended as an introduction to this subject.

Despite its generally excellent construction, some chapters of the volume fall well below par. The chapter on kidney retransplantation is a bit personalized and too anecdotal for this complex subject. Furthermore, only one chapter mentions the role of
thrombolytic therapy in revascularization care. Even in a surgical textbook, this developing therapeutic intervention deserves more detailed treatment.

As a well-prepared, attractive, and authoritative treatment of reoperative vascular surgery, this text certainly continues the new tradition of fine books in the "Science and Practice of Surgery." Despite its few (and truthfully insignificant) shortcomings, the book should serve as a current reference for this complex subject.

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**The Health Century. A Companion to the PBS Television Series.** By Edward Shorter. New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1987. 304 pp. $21.95.

It was not long ago that the physician was regarded by most people as a helper rather than a healer. This view of the physician was portrayed in the nineteenth century painting "The Doctor" by Sir Luke Fildes, in which a physician is seated at the bedside of a dying child, and, as Lewis Thomas describes, is "engaged in what was for that period in medicine, the only course available at this stage of serious illness: he is monitoring the patient . . . there is nothing whatever that he can do to alter the course of the illness or affect its outcome." This role of the physician solely as helper changed markedly in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This change is the subject of Edward Shorter's book, *The Health Century*, a companion volume to the PBS television series which shares the same title. Dr. Shorter leads us in a stepwise fashion through the past one hundred and fifty or so years of medical progress, dealing with such landmarks as the introduction of penicillin, antibiotics, and the polio vaccine. The book is extremely well written and flows nicely, while the reader is made privy to many of the interesting stories and circumstances which surrounded each discovery, much as occurs in Watson's *The Double Helix*. Shorter is careful about placing each advancement in its proper historical and social perspective and discusses the people who pioneered the discoveries as much as the discoveries themselves. Unfortunately, he gets a bit carried away. At certain points, the book resembles a parade of characters, and, much like Dickens or Dostoevsky, the author has a nasty habit of resurrecting them from time to time with little forewarning.

In addition, he presents a view of medical progress which is heavily skewed pharmacologically, and, while he chooses to include countless obvious examples of pharmacologic medical advancements (penicillin, aspirin, tagamet, and so on), he does little in the way of discussing advances in non-pharmacologic areas of medicine.

Finally, while the author's treatment of the topic at hand is fairly comprehensive, at times it fails to make even the barest reference to important advances (for example, the first heart transplant).

In summary, this work, a companion volume to a PBS series, offers the layman a pleasurable journey through medical history over the past 150 years; however, its strength does not lie in an exhaustive historical treatment of the topic.

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