In this publication a total of 63 contributors from Brazil address partial aspects of certain illnesses which occur in tropical climates. Following the foreword are 47 chapters, after which is a two-paged appendix with normal values of common biochemical and hematological laboratory methods.

As is noted in the foreword, the authors' main objective is to describe illnesses widespread in tropical and subtropical areas. They have also noted how their origin and development in these regions are often influenced by present social and epidemiological circumstances such as chronic malnutrition, poor hygiene and inadequate public health care.

Perhaps one of the more interesting aspects of this book is the perspective of experienced surgeons (as is already evident from the title). The size of this book does not provide enough space for a detailed surgical analysis and this would not be the case even if the focus were placed on those illnesses which are found more often in the tropics than elsewhere. The chapters tend to concentrate on a particular group of problems which are associated with certain nosologic units. The principles of surgical procedures are outlined; basics of pharmacological treatments are listed by subject. As can be expected, most of the chapters are devoted to infectious illness. In such cases the etiological agent, method of transmission, and epidemiological data are briefly listed. Individual chapters are accompanied by occasional charts and pictorial materials.

1. General chapters – Foreword, followed by Tropical Pathology and Nutritional Support take up a total of 4 pages.
3. Remaining textual content is devoted to transmissive diseases.

The main problem the student might face with this book is the manner in which the material is organised. This is another reason why the same well-known facts are repeated in several chapters. The following chapters may serve as an example.


Chapters 2, 5, 13 and 31 are devoted to cysticercosis and hydatid disease.

American trypanosomiasis: it’s several aspects are described in chapters 6, 7, 22, 24, 25 and 46.

Diseases caused by <i>Wuchereria bancrofti</i> (parasitic lymphedema and genital filariosis) are described in chapters 11 and 15.

Problems related to <i>Ascaris lumbricoides</i> are discussed in chapters 32 (Abdominal Complications of <i>Ascaris lumbricoides</i> in Children) and 43 (Ascaridiasis).

The other diseases included in the book are those caused by parasites: leishmaniasis – both cutaneous and visceral, amebiasis, angiostrongyliasis. Caused by fungi: paracoccidioidomycosis, and by bacteria: typhoid fever, lymhogranuloma venereum.

I would strongly recommend the editors to arrange the material more effectively before the next publication. This would bring the character of the book closer to that of a textbook. Regardless that, this book can be a suitable supplement to the library of a student who is interested in the given problem.

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