

and describe many of the clinical problems that are met and how to overcome them. The four chapters on endoscopic perforator vein surgery describe, in a most open and helpful manner, the different approaches that are being used.

In this well-edited work all the authors must be congratulated on producing a first class book. Reading it was both enjoyable and instructive. All those treating chronic venous insufficiency would benefit from perusing it and surgeons dealing with venous disease should have it on their bookshelf.

*P.E.M. Jarrett*  
General Surgery  
Kingston Hospital  
Galsworthy Road  
Kingston upon Thames  
Surrey KT2 7QB  
UK

PII S0966-6532(98)00032-8

---

**Scientific Unit Conversion: A Practical Guide to Metrication**

*François Cardarelli*  
Springer, Berlin.

Few would dream of buying, much less browsing through, a book entitled 'Scientific Unit Conversion'. Yet Cardarelli's book of this title proves how wrong the

majority can be. It is the only truly comprehensive book on the conversion of scientific units into their SI equivalents. Over 10000 precise conversion factors are listed covering ancient and modern units and those in between.

Medicine, chemistry, physics, biology, engineering and computer science are amongst the subject areas covered. But it is in the 2000 definitions of the units that the curious can be amused. In 1795, the *Système Métrique Décimal* was instituted in France. But clearly the Emperor Napoleon was not enamoured with this. In 1812 he abandoned metric units and reinstated the old ones. The metric system was only reintroduced in 1837! Rural doctors should not be confused by the old patient who says his horse has eaten his truss. A truss is also a weight of hay in the UK and USA! An octave is not only a musical term but also 16 gallons of whisky and a wink is  $3.3 \times 10^{-10}$  s. But as well as the obscure this book is full of essential conversions.

This is a unique scholarly work that every laboratory and researcher should own as should those interested in the history of science and medicine.

*P.E.M. Jarrett*  
Kingston Hospital  
Galsworthy Road  
Kingston upon Thames  
Surrey KT2 7GB  
UK

PII S0966-6532(98)00031-6

*Ambulatory Surgery 6(4)(1998) 256*