invoked to assist in diagnosis, a range of various host factors that may predispose to infection extending from hair-line skull fracture to sickle-cell disease, and abnormalities of the complement system. Modern techniques, such as brain scanning, angiography, cisternography, electroencephalography as well as fluorescent-antibody tests, countercurrent immunoelectrophoresis, Limulus lysate test, Nitro-blue tetrazolium test, autoradiography, and procedures for detecting bacterial antigen in CSF and serum, are referred to in the appropriate sections.

Each chapter discusses complications and prognosis and gives recommendations about treatment while the general editors admit that this aspect of the handbook may not meet the approval of all readers and is the part of the book that is likely to become outdated quickest. Not every chapter gives a detailed account of gross and histopathology when pyogenic organisms are being considered, otherwise the charge of repetition would have been made, with justification. The chapter on the neurological sequelae to pertussis infection and immunisation was studied with care in view of the current situation and was considered to be a well-balanced presentation of the facts, and indeed this chapter contained more references to pathology than some other chapters. Because the conditions are particularly uncommon in the UK now, and seldom fatal, the reviewer was particularly attracted to the chapters on brucellosis, leptospirosis, and leprosy. Indeed, the chapter on leprosy is the only one in this volume to use electron micrographs.

Most of the authors are American and clinicians, but Europe and India are also represented; all write clearly and with authority. It is a worthwhile reference book on topics of which it is becoming more and more difficult for any one clinician (or even unit or department) to acquire much experience, at least in the UK. Very nearly all illustrations are of high quality and enhance the text. The reference lists are full yet selective.

This volume fills a very useful place in the series and, in conjunction with the other two volumes still to be published, No. 34 on viral and rickettsial diseases and No. 35 on all other classes of infectious organisms, should make a valuable trio in their coverage of the field of infections. The volume is expensive even by present-day standards although it has a 'de luxe' presentation, and while each volume is a 'handbook', it is rather

erroneous to title the whole series in this way, when an encyclopaedia is being provided.

J. F. BOYD

Fibrinolysis: Current Fundamental and Clinical Concepts. Edited by P. J. Gaffney and S. Balkuv-Ulutin. (Pp. x + 240; illustrated; £9.50.) London, New York, San Francisco: Academic Press. 1978.

This modestly priced book provides a wealth of basic information on fibrinolytic mechanisms and the pathological changes in disease states. The physiology and biochemistry of natural and synthetic activators and inhibitors, the interactions of plasmin with fibrinogen and fibrin, and the catabolism of fibrinogen and its breakdown products comprise the first section of the book. This is followed by chapters on pathological alterations of fibrinolysis in clinical situations, including inflammation, disseminated intravascular coagulation, pregnancy, cancer, and renal disease. While clinically applied, these reviews emphasise fundamental concepts and recent research findings. Thrombolytic therapy with urokinase and streptokinase is also briefly reviewed.

This book will be of considerable value to basic scientists, clinicians, and pathologists working on fibrinolysis. It is not for the trainee or general reader. While most of the book is based on a 1977 symposium held in Istanbul, the contributors and editors have succeeded in making it more broadly based to provide a compact but informative review of current research activity in this important subject.

J. STUART

Manual of Basic Neuropathology, 2nd edition. By R. Escourolle and J. Poirier (Translated by L. J. Rubinstein). (Pp. xiii + 242; illustrated; £8.50.) London: W. B. Saunders. 1978.

First published in France in 1971, the English version of the book, which was favourably received, appeared in 1973. The second edition of this paperbacked, moderately priced, and somewhat enlarged book is therefore welcomed.

The original format has been retained, though inevitably with the growth of knowledge fairly extensive changes have had to be made to the text. There are now 11 chapters that adequately deal with the principal lesions of the nervous system, an appendix that outlines neuropathological

techniques with additional information on muscle, peripheral nerve, and brain biopsies, a short bibliography of recommended textbooks and monographs, and a full index that gives both the page and figure numbers.

Whereas some of the chapters have been restructured and only slightly modified, the updating of those on infectious diseases and genetically determined metabolic diseases due to enzyme defects has required that they be rewritten. Even so, only those recent advances in neurobiology that have helped to elucidate basic processes in neuropathology have been included. Regrettably, there has been a tendency not to include some of the better established functional changes that occur in association with intracranial disease. For example, the opportunity might have been taken to devote a separate chapter to the pathophysiology of raised intracranial pressure. This would have been preferable to the classification of rare disorders simply for the sake of completeness.

The air of mysticism that not infrequently surrounds neuropathology is due in part to its 'highly specialised nature'. This unfortunate state of affairs has been part fostered by the lack of a suitable book that has bridged the gap between a chapter in a standard textbook and the specialised reference books. This manual helps to fill the gap, and there seems little doubt that its continuing popularity will stem from the clarity of its presentation, the high-quality illustrations, and the liberal use of flow and line diagrams. This book is highly recommended for general pathologists and as a primer for neurologists, neurosurgeons, and neuropathologists in training.

D. L. GRAHAM

Steroid Contraception and the Risk of Neoplasia. Report of a WHO Scientific Group. World Health Organization Technical Report Series No. 619. (Pp. 54; \$3.00.) Geneva: World Health Organization. 1978.

This short report is a great contrast to many of the other publications in this series; it contains a very clear review of the risk to women from the use of steroid contraception. This is based upon published case reports and epidemiological studies.

There is a brief introduction, which includes a discussion of some of the