effects on the skeleton. There is an excellent concise description of histological abnormalities and a discussion of the diagnostic value of estimating circulating D metabolites. Skeletal changes associated with anti-convulsant drug therapy and corticosteroid treatment are comprehensively described. Other chapters deal with nutritional osteomalacia, renal osteodystrophy in children, skeletal abnormalities in gastrointestinal-hepatic disease, and postmenopausal osteoporosis. That there are statements in different chapters that are contradictory or with which other observers might disagree is a reflection of our relative lack of understanding in what is a very complex area of physiology and pathology. As a review of current information and thinking on this subject this book is recommended.

CG WOODS

Microbiology and Pathology. 12th ed. Ed Alice Lorraine Smith. (Pp xii + 801; illustrated; £11.50.) YB Medical Publishers. 1980.

This book provides a comprehensive introductory overview to two disciplines of pathology. Some 500 pages are given to microbiology, mycology, and parasitology, with a further 300 pages for histopathology. The text is concise, and each chapter is short and informative with forceful photographs and clear diagrams. It is a pity that the diagnostic illustration of parasitic ova lacks clarity and does not give relative dimensions. There are chapters on host resistance and a substantial section on public health.

The authors have succeeded in emphasising the clinical aspect of each topic, and the layout of the book is attractive. There are two disadvantages to the reader in this country; the nomenclature largely follows *Bergey's Manual* (consequently corynebacteria are described in the same chapter as actinomycosis) and the cultural media are those used in North America. There is little about mechanisms of bacterial resistance to antibiotics for a book keen to show the practical aspects of microbiology.

This is a wide ranging book and the standard of information is suitable to people studying these disciplines for the first time. It will serve well MLSOs doing the TEC and HNC courses.

PJ SANDERSON

Interferon and Interferon Inducers: Clinical Application. Ed DA Stringfellow. (Pp 329;

illustrated; Sw Fr 92.) Marcel Dekker. 1980.

Here is another review volume on interferon. It deals with the production and purification of interferon for human use and also with its stability and pharmacokinetics, important in trials and clinical use. There are chapters on the use of interferon in malignancies and viral infections. There are also useful chapters summarising preclinical and small amounts of clinical information on inducers such as polynucleotides, tilorone hydrochloride, propanediamines, and polyanions. Finally, there is a laboratory-based chapter on interferon as an immune modulator.

The chapters are all up to date, with references up to 1979 in most of them, and also a sprinkling of unpublished material. There is little overlapping. The chapter on treatment of malignant disease is understandably already dated. There are minor errors of style, but all chapters are readable. The book would help anyone wanting to keep up with the field or to find his way to recent important work.

DAJ TYRRELL

Liver Biopsy Interpretation. PJ Scheuer. (Pp 260; 160 black and white plates; 29 colour plates; £19.50.) Bailliere Tindall. 1980.

The third edition of this book is in the same format as made the two previous editions such a success but with the updating required after a lapse of seven years. If liver biopsies come into your laboratory, buy it as an essential bench book for consultants and trainees.

G SLAVIN

Biochemical Correlates of Lung Disease. BC Fanburg. (Pp 44; illustrated; £6.) Pergamon Press. 1979.

This monograph comprises one issue (Vol 2, No 4) of *Molecular Aspects of Medicine*, an interdisciplinary review journal with which this reviewer was previously unfamiliar. It is set in camera-ready typescript and consists of a brief introduction, a short chapter on the architecture of the lung, a longer one on pulmonary cellular and structural function and dysfunction, and a final chapter entitled strategy for therapy, which is only four pages long. The 11 figures comprise four electron micrographs and seven diagrams of dynamic processes. There are 125 references. This slim volume would

benefit the research scientist turning to the lung from another field or the general pathologist or clinician seeking a succinct review of pulmonary structure and function.

B CORRIN

Histochemistry. Theoretical and Applied. 4th ed. Vol 1. AGE Pearse. (Pp x + 439; illustrated; £25.) Churchill Livingstone. 1980.

It is now 30 years since Professor Pearse wrote the first chapters of the first edition of this book. The increased awareness of the importance and relevance of histochemistry, especially to pathology, has been due in large measure to this standard text.

This fourth edition now comprises three volumes, of which this, subtitled *Preparative and Optical Technology*, is the first. A number of subjects have been dealt with in greater detail than in the former editions; of these, the chapter on Immunocytochemistry is probably of greatest current interest to clinical pathologists. The discussion of newer fixatives and their application as well as the two chapters by Dr FWD Rost on fluorescence microscopy and quantitative histochemistry will also be welcomed.

Sadly, as with so much else, the price one pays for erudition is so increased that these three volumes may not be within the grasp of the wide audience awaiting them.

L BITENSKY

Aspects of Slow and Persistent Virus Infections. Ed DAJ Tyrrell. (Pp xii + 286; illustrated; 80 Guilders.) Martinus Nijhoff. 1979.

This book comprises the proceedings of a European workshop on aspects of slow and persistent virus infections held in April 1979. Agents discussed include scrapie, measles virus, retroviruses, and visna. Generally, examples of both fundamental and applied work with a particular agent are presented. The papers range in style from excellent broad reviews to detailed descriptions of very recent experimental results. The practical difficulties of handling many of these systems are highlighted, as is the limited extent of our present understanding. This is tantalising reading for all those interested in infectious diseases and immunology.

GB CLEMENTS