Book reviews

their eminence in their own specialty but for their ability to communicate complex subjects into a form which is eminently readable. The book is superbly illustrated and this contributes considerably to its value.

This book can be highly recommended to all those wishing to acquire a wider breadth of knowledge in the area of immunological disease. With so many authors and chapters all outstanding, it would be invidious to single out any particular chapters for review. Suffice it to say that one is led effortlessly through immunogenetics, gene products on various cell types which now serve as an aid in the analysis of lymphoid malignancies. The various sub-sets of lymphocytes are described plus interaction with macrophages. Various authors discuss the mediators of hypersensitivity, and other soluble factors such as complement and C reactive protein.

This goes beyond being one more textbook on mechanisms in immunology; it deals with the application of this new knowledge to diagnosis and in particular monoclonal antibodies are discussed and their application to both diagnosis and treatment of disease.

It is a rare pleasure to review a book of such quality and wide appeal.

DA WILLOUGHBY

Human Tumour Markers: Biological Basis and Clinical Relevance. Ed HE Nieburgs, GD Birkmayer and JV Klavins. (Pp 346; £43.) Alan R Liss. 1983.

This book is a compilation of papers presented at the first international conference on human tumour markers held in Munich last year. The first two sentences are perhaps the most important. These state that "current tumour markers are neither highly sensitive nor tumour-specific. No ideal tumour marker has been found". Following these opening remarks one can be forgiven for approaching the rest of the book with a certain scepticism and in some ways one is not disappointed. With the exception of well-known hormonal substances, there is no circulating tumour marker which is of outstanding use in diagnosis or follow-up of tumours, and correspondingly no immunohistochemical marker either. Nevertheless, there is much of value in these papers which together

summarise everything that is currently known about the subject. From this base line more useful markers must inevitably emerge and pathologists engaged in research on this topical subject will find much that is useful in this book, particularly with regard to techniques and avenues for future investigation.

PG ISAACSON

Cancer of the Prostate. Clinics in Oncology. Vol 2, no 2. Guest ed. Gerald P Murphy. (Pp 501; £11.75.) WB Saunders. 1983.

With ageing populations, most western countries are bound to experience an increase in the incidence of prostatic carcinoma. In the USA it is already the second most common malignant tumour in males, and the relatively advanced age of those afflicted creates therapeutic problems about which there is understandable controversy. The publication in the Clinics in Oncology series is therefore both timely and relevant. It is not inappropriate that most of the constituent papers are devoted to the various aspects of treatment, including surgery and radiotherapy, and there are detailed accounts of developing trends in hormone therapy and chemotherapy which are likely to become increasingly employed in the future. While only one chapter is devoted exclusively to pathology, this contains useful updated diagnostic information and the illustrations are of a good standard. Pathologists will also welcome the interesting chapter on epidemiology and aetiology, as well as the review of clinical diagnostic techniques in current use. This publication is highly recommended to both clinicians and laboratory workers who seek to improve their capacity to deal with the many and varied problems presented by this important disease.

FD LEE

The Microbiology and Treatment of Life-Threatening Infections. AM Emmerson. (Pp 200; £19.) John Wiley. 1982.

The stated purpose of this volume is to offer guidance to the clinician. This it does in a reasonable and well organised fashion and it would be churlish to complain there is little new or surprising for the mic-

robiologist. The importance of thorough clinical observations to the worthwhile practice of clinical microbiology is stressed throughout. The clinical reader will, one hopes, take away the important knowledge that a good clinical diagnosis as to the likely site of infection combined with expert examination of a small number of well collected specimens of relevant material will not only provide a specific diagnosis but define the antibiotic therapy indicated. The importance of purely local knowledge of antibiotic susceptibility patterns is emphasised. The recommendations on antibiotic treatment for severe infections pending laboratory investigations are straightforward and suggest well-tryed and relatively inexpensive agents. It is stressed that totally "blind" treatment is very rarely indicated and there is a welcome reluctance to over-indulge the latest "Cephmagics" and "Wondercillins." For a quick reference a summary table or tables indicating antibiotics, dosages, and uses might have been helpful.

The price of this book of less than two hundred pages at £19 might deter the widest readership.

RC GEORGE

Precancerous States. Ed RL Carter. (Pp 395; £35.) Oxford University Press. 1984.

The concept of "pre-cancer" is still a fuzzy one, and the reporting of premalignant lesions is a field where the diagnostic pathologist must tread warily, choosing his words with care. For the clinician, the dilemma in dealing with precancerous lesions is that a conservative approach may be ineffective, yet effective treatment may be needlessly dramatic. Both pathologist and oncologist will find much instruction in this multi-author survey of premalignant states. After chapters on epidemiology (Alderson), and genetics (Harnden), there are eleven chapters on precancerous states at various sites. Such names as Weinbren (liver), Mostofi (prostate), and Spriggs (cervix) guarantee an authoritative presentation. A final chapter on clinical implications (Calman) ends with the hope that "with clearer recognition of precancerous states, cancer therapy can . . . become less destructive and more efficacious". This informative book should help to achieve this aim. Perhaps a second edition could

include surveys of some sites (eg testis, ovary) not specifically covered.

Recommended to pathologists and clinicians who have to manoeuvre on this difficult terrain.

OG DODGE

Testis Tumors. International Perspectives in Urology. Vol 7. Ed John P Donohue. (Pp 308; £33.50.) Williams & Wilkins. 1983.

This treatise on testicular tumours is one of a series devoted to Perspectives in Urology. It only covers the subject of germ cell neoplasms but from fundamental biology through to their clinical diagnosis and treatment, the contributions being by international experts. The first seven chapters are most relevant from a pathological point of view. The British and American approaches to the classification of testicular germ cell tumours are compared and contrasted together with the current utility of employing immunocytochemistry as an aid to their more accurate classification. The current usefulness of measuring tumour index substances such as AFP and HCG in the blood urine is extensively documented while highlighting the need for further markers to identify non-AFP and non-HCG-producing cells. Two excellent chapters are devoted to comparing human and murine germ cell tumours and the recent advances in embryogenesis and differentiation which have ensued from such studies. The remainder of the book discusses methods for the detection and management of the disease both in the United Kingdom and in the USA.

There have been several books published recently on testicular tumours. This is one of the better ones and is to be recommended.

A MUNRO NEVILLE

Catalogue of Chromosome Aberrations in Cancer. Reprinted from Cytogenetics and Cell Genetics, Vol 36, nos 1-2. Ed F Mitelman. (Pp 516; soft cover Sw fr 132.) Karger. 1983.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for either cancer research workers or clinical cytogeneticists to keep up with the growing literature on the cytogenetics of human

cancer. Nevertheless modern banding techniques greatly enhance the value of cytogenetic analysis in both cancer research and the monitoring of cancer therapy so a guide to the relevant publications in this field is badly needed.

Professor Felix Mitelman has set out to meet this need through a catalogue containing extensive, though not comprehensive, data on both published and some unpublished case reports. He lists individual reports, chromosome by chromosome, systematically according to morphological diagnosis, with the reference for each report. The problem of the various classifications of non-Hodgkin's lymphomas is avoided by listing such lymphomas under each of four separate classifications. This does lead to some overlap. Far more overlap arises from the fact that most reports have multiple entries arising from the multiple chromosome anomaly found in most cases. For the catalogue to be of any practical use this repetitive entry is unavoidable. The material, which excludes normal karyotypes, comprises 3844 cases. The outstanding advantage of listing these under each chromosome is that one can immediately see if any particular chromosomal anomaly is associated with a specific diagnostic category, for example Burkitt's lymphoma with translocations between chromosome number 8 and numbers 2, 14 and 22. The diagnostic category main headings appear under each chromosome so that if there are no case reports under a particular heading for a specific chromosome this is apparent.

However, there is no indication of the number of cases of any diagnostic category in which chromosomal anomaly has been sought and not found. Whilst it would not be worth quoting such reports individually, data on the number of such cases would be a useful addition in a future edition. Another improvement would be a separate main diagnostic heading of inherited tumours with at least each of the better known inherited tumours listed under it. This would be helpful to researchers in these disorders, even if the entry was only a negative one. Some sort of entry of chromosomal rearrangements associated with specific oncogenes would also be of value. Finally, an index of page entries for individual diagnoses would be useful. For example, an introductory table tells us that there is a single report of hydatidiform mole in the catalogue but it requires a chromosome by chromosome search to locate it under chromosome 2.

This volume is in a sense a companion to

DS Bargaonkar's "Chromosomal Variation in Man", 3rd edition, 1980, Alan R Liss, New York, which lists constitutional variations. As such it will become a further essential reference work for scientists and clinicians in the field. The suggested additions would regrettably expand the work but would increase its usefulness appreciably.

M d'A CRAWFORD

Notice

British Society for Dermatopathology

The British Society for Dermatopathology is holding a one day symposium on the subject "Monoclonal Antibodies in Dermatopathology." This will take place at Keele University on Wednesday 19 September 1984 immediately before the winter meeting of the British Society of Investigative Dermatology. Guest speakers include Dr Kirk Ruiters from Leiden and Dr Julia Polak from London. For further details please apply to: Dr Robin Russell Jones, Secretary, British Society for Dermatopathology, St John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London WC2H 7BJ.