iance by duplicating specimens and blank control. Replication is not associated with appreciable penalties in terms of laboratory performance or finance but may draw attention to idiosyncratic errors. Such errors occurred on two occasions, with specimen 828 giving an overall rate of idiosyncratic errors of 0.5%. The runs in which these errors occurred were not included in the statistical analysis.

On balance, although we leave it to individual laboratories to draw their own conclusions from our data, we believe that specimen replication is not indicated in this method, although we cannot extrapolate our data to other EMIT analyser systems. If an effective reduction in total imprecision is required, this would be best achieved through improvements in calibration rather than test specimen replication. Work is required to evaluate whether these improvements can be achieved by modifying the assay of standards in terms of their number and replication or whether this problem reflects a limitation imposed by the equipment used.

We are indebted to Mr MJ Bywater, Senior Chief MLSO, Southmead General Hospital, for kind donation of the National Control sera.

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Book reviews

Interpretation of Breast Biopsies. Interpretation Series. Darryl Carter. (Pp 201; \$44.50.) Raven Press. 1984.

This volume is one of a series edited by Ancel Blaustein which seems mainly to be directed at those in training in histopathol-

ogy. Its principal strengths are good black and white illustrations and clear reviews of the relevant papers available in different areas, with concise, up to date accounts of Paget's disease and stromal and lobular lesions. The section on the variables that have been considered as prognostic indicators in what are grouped together as "high grade invasive carcinomas" is good and includes comments on the probability of finding small metastases in nodes of different sizes which should, but often do not, figure in discussions of staging data.

The earlier chapters are the weakest, and the second entitled "Biopsy" consists largely of truisms and follows a defensive (? American = style). Under the heading "Frozen Section" appears "If the frozen section shows carcinoma and if the gross appearance and consistency is that of a carcinoma, this can be safely reported. If the gross and microscopic appearances do not correlate, it is best to defer the diagnosis until permanent sections are prepared". What? I thought that was why we cut frozen sections!

Other faults, from the English speaking point of view, include the statement that "it is necessary to properly interpret" a biopsy in order "to accurately place" it in the spectrum of breast disorders. This book will be helpful in parts to the trainee.

CL BERRY

Surgical Pathology of the Mediastinum. AM Marchevsky and M Kaneko. (Pp 304; \$63.00.) Raven Press. 1984.

With the development of advanced imaging and endoscopic techniques previously inaccessible lesions of the mediastinum have come under increasing investigative scrutiny, and the pathologist must become aware of the diagnostic problems involved. This book undoubtedly fulfils this function in an admirably comprehensive manner despite at times a somewhat oblique style of writing. Most pathologists will find the detailed account of the thymus and its diseases especially useful, and the multifarious other neoplastic and cystic disturbances of the mediastinum receive excellent coverage. Only with the lymphomas which are classified according to the US National Cancer Institute Working Formulation (despite the comment that it is not a classification) is there any faltering in confidence, and in this respect it is curious that there is no clear recommendation with regard to the handling of pathological material from the mediastinum. Even so this is a helpful, wide ranging and well illustrated

book which brings together a great deal of the information pathologists will require to understand this hitherto poorly explored area.

FD LEE

A Manual of Cytotechnology. 6th ed. Ed Catherine M Keebler and James W Reagan. (Pp 325; \$75.00.) Raven Press. 1984.

This is the sixth edition of a loose leaf book produced by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists for students of cytotechnology. Most of the twenty seven chapters describe the cytopathology of the body systems encountered in clinical cytology but the history of the subject, the microscope, bench techniques, laboratory safety, cell structure, and function are also represented. It is well illustrated with colour and half tone plates and line drawings.

The chapters on gynaecological and respiratory tract cytology are presented well but a new edition should include mention of alveolar lavage and the modern techniques for direct endometrial sampling. The reluctance of American cytologists to adopt haematological staining methods limits the usefulness of this publication for European cytologists. The references include one to the Eng. J. Clin. Pathol. among several more inaccuracies.

There is much useful information for cytotechnologists in this well illustrated book but the price is beyond most laboratory budgets.

ELIZABETH HUDSON

Ischaemic Colitis. JWAJ Reenders, GNJ Tytgat, G Rosenbusch, and S Gratama. (Pp 186; Dfl145; £37.) Martinus Nijhoff Publishers BV. 1984.

This monograph constitutes an "in depth" retrospective study of 199 cases of ischaemic colitis collected from various hospitals in the Netherlands and analysed by a gastroenterologist, two radiologists and a pathologist. Histological material was available from 165 patients comprising 82 colonic resections and 32 biopsies with follow up autopsies in 108 cases. There is an excellent review of the literature and a critical assessment of the clinical and laboratory aspects, as well as the endoscopy, the radiology and the pathology. The

survival rate in the non-gangrenous variety was 95% with conservative management, but the mortality rate in the gangrenous variety was 98% with conservative treatment, 56% following resection and 67% after treatment by colostomy. It is acknowledged that the high complication and mortality rates are due to a frequent misdiagnosis of ischaemic colonic disease and a failure to identify an ischaemic aetiology; in particular, failure to recognise the gangrenous variety and the tendency to perform resections which are too limited since ischaemic necrosis was frequently discovered at the suture lines and in the colostomy ends at autopsy.

The text, tables, diagrams, and illustrations project valuable observations and the monograph is undoubtedly a valuable addition to the literature. The chronic "non resolving" form (9%) and the stricturing form (7.5%) are interesting in that they are associated with irreversible mural changes which lead to tubular narrowing or to persistent ulcerative colitis which frequently requires surgical resection. The authors point out that in 44% of the histological material there was no mention of the condition of the small mesenteric vessels regarding aetiology. One minor criticism is that it is wrongly stated on page 64 that fissures are absent in ischaemic colitis which is inconsistent with the information in Table 15.5 that fissuring is not uncommon. Pseudomembrane formation is described but its occurrence is not emphasised and although bacterial proliferation and clostridium infection are discussed, the role and significance of clostridial involvement with gas bubble formation and toxemia are not considered in detail.

I strongly recommend this monograph to gastroenterologists, radiologists, pathologists, and surgeons as an aid to the interpretation and understanding of ischaemic colitis.

H THOMPSON

Human Blood Coagulation, Haemostasis and Thrombosis. 3rd ed. Rosemary Biggs and CR Rizza. (Pp 601; £42.50.) Blackwells. 1984.

It is eight years since the last edition of this well known book appeared. Since then of course there have been great advances in knowledge about haemostasis, and consequently many chapters have been rewritten and several new ones added. The sections on laboratory reagents and methods have been dropped but there is a chapter on laboratory diagnosis, on the statistics of bioassays, and on controls in assays of

blood coagulation factors.

The style of the book is unchanged. It is a collection of reviews covering main topics, and where appropriate the clinical management of bleeding and thrombotic disorders. It is still predominantly an Oxford book because, of the twenty distinguished contributors, seven are from the Oxford Haemophilia Centre, joined by ten from elsewhere in the United Kingdom and three from the United States.

Throughout references are abundant and date from the last century to as recent as 1984. A very nicely produced volume which is already a standard haematological text and deserves to remain one.

P STORY

Leukaemia. Recent Developments in Diagnosis and Therapy. Recent Results in Cancer Research No 93. Ed E Thiel and S Thierfelder. (Pp 305; DM 126; US \$46.60.) Springer. 1984.

A number of monographs on leukaemia have recently been published which attempt to summarise the often bewilderingly large amounts of clinical and scientific data appearing on the subject lately. Such works are often not only a valuable source of reference but also may provide a critical analysis of current treatment protocols. This work, almost all of which is written by German authors, concentrates mainly on the clinical features and treatment of both chronic and acute leukaemia with three useful introductory chapters on the possible role of viruses in the aetiology of leukaemia, cytogenetics, and cytology. There is an additional valuable linking chapter by Thiel on the possible prognostic value of cell marker studies. The work contains clear reviews on adult lymphatic and myeloid leukaemia by Hoelzer and Foon & Gale respectively, and a concise but well referenced article on allogeneic bone marrow transplantation. Unfortunately, a comprehensive review of the extensive German experience in the treatment of ALL in children is marred by somewhat stilted English. The book is very well referenced throughout (up to 1983) and is produced to a high standard. It would be a useful buy for any department with an interest in the treatment of leukaemia.

RE MARCUS

Tropical and Geographical Medicine. Kenneth S Warren and Adel AF Mahmoud. (Pp 1175; £61.50.) McGraw-Hill. 1984.

In these days of population mobility clinical

pathologists of all types have an interest in tropical medicine and pathology whether or not they practise solely in temperate climates. This is a refreshing new book which places the emphasis on mechanisms and pathogenesis of disease rather than on clinical presentation and therapy. It necessarily covers a broad spectrum both of infective and non-infective conditions though not surprisingly more space is given to the former. The contributions are mainly American but there are excellent chapters from British physicians. This is a "best buy" at £61.50. If you think that it is a luxury for the laboratory, make sure the hospital library has a copy.

G SLAVIN

Notice

Third Symposium of Inflammation Markers

This is a three day symposium to be held on 26-28 June 1985 in Lyon, France. The programme will include lectures and short communications on interleukins, extracellular matrix in inflammation (collagen, fibronectin, SAA, SAP), and immunopharmacology (new anti-inflammatory antirheumatic, and immunomodulatory drugs). There will also be poster sessions and round table discussions.

Application forms may be obtained from Dr JT Whicher, Department of Chemical Pathology, Bristol Royal Infirmary, Bristol BS2 8HW (Tel: 0272-22041 ext 2840).

Some new titles

The receipt of books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits.

Carcinogenesis and Mutagenesis Testing. Ed JF Douglas. (Pp 335; \$59.50.) The Humana Press Inc. 1984.

Regulation and Control of Cell Proliferation. Ed K Lapis and A Jeney. (Pp 512; \$32.50.) Akademiai Kiado. 1984.

Recent Developments in Clinical Research. Vol 13. Vol Ed CE Organos. (Pp 192; Sfr 164/US \$98.25.) Karger. 1984.

Basement Membranes and Cell Movement. Ciba Foundation Symposium 108. (Pp 285; £26.50) Pitman. 1984.

The Apocrine Glands and the Breast. Marshall BL Craigmyle. (Pp 82; £24.) John Wiley. 1984.