The Cytopathology of Esophageal Carcinoma. Precancerous Lesions and Early Cancer. Yi-Jing Shu. (Pp 100; £23.50.) Blackwells. 1985. ISBN 0-89352-171-X.

This slim volume gives a fascinating account of the use of an abrasive balloon technique in China for the diagnosis of oesophageal carcinoma. The primary purpose was early cancer detection while the second objective was a study of the natural history of this disease. In China oesophageal carcinoma is the second commonest cause of cancer death, three times as common as lung cancer in men and four times as common as breast cancer in women. The book discusses aetiological factors, predominantly dietary, describes the author's collection technique and illustrates with good photomicrographs the cytological and pathological appearances. The success of the method in early diagnosis and in the study of dysplasia is demonstrated. The author deals only with squamous cell carcinoma and does not cover lower oesophageal lesions. It is in these lesions, comparatively inaccessible to biopsy, and in malignant strictures for which the balloon technique is unsuitable, that cytology can be most valuable in Britain. The book therefore has only limited relevance for the routine diagnostic cytopathologist, although it elegantly illustrates once more the potential of cytology as a screening technique.

HELENA E HUGHES

Interpretation of Endometrial Biopsies. 2nd ed. Biopsy Interpretation Series. Ancel Blaustein. (Pp 304; \$42.50.) Raven Press. 1985.

This latest addition to the *Biopsy Interpretation Series* is a short monograph on the histological features likely to be found in endometrial curettings. It is clearly written and describes the changes in the menstrual cycle in health and disease, endometritis, hyperplasia and carcinoma of the endometrium, and sarcomas of the uterus. One or two of the tabulated lists of conditions could be confusing—inactive endometrium is classified as a subdivision of proliferative endometrium and endolymphatic stromal myosis is given as a separate entity from endometrial stromal sarcoma—but the text clarifies the problems adequately.

In his preface to the first edition the late Dr Blaustein writes that he intended the

book as a primer and an atlas of endometrial lesions. As an atlas I think the work fails. The focus of many of the half tone figures is only approximate and some are quite pointless. Many references are rather dated, and there are numerous irritating omissions, such as final page numbers, year of publication, and even journal name. If a primer on gynaecological pathology is needed it would be better to read Dr Blaustein's larger work.

DAVID LOWE

Organisation and Practice in Tuberculosis Bacteriology. CH Collins, JM Grange, MD Yates. (Pp 125; £16.) Butterworths. 1985. ISBN 0 407 00296 0.

This description of the organisation and practice of a tuberculosis bacteriology laboratory is the complete bench manual. It presents in detail the methods to be used, the minor equipment required, and the formulae of media and reagents. It presents concisely and clearly the taxonomy of mycobacteria and describes a practical working classification. Furthermore, the clinical reasons for the investigations are presented, including those for the identification of species, drug sensitivity tests, and antibiotic assays. The details of the technical procedures used in the diagnosis and control of treatment of leprosy are also included.

The authors' life time experience of mycobacteria is clearly reflected in the discerning discussion of the different methods available and the problems of running a diagnostic laboratory service. This book should become essential reading for all microbiologists undertaking a diagnostic service for diseases caused by this genus, both in the United Kingdom and developing countries. A wide range of methods is presented to permit choices appropriate for the available financial resources.

JB SELKON

HLA and Disease Associations. Jawahar L Tiwari, Paul I Terasaki. (Pp 472; DM 236.) Springer-Verlag. 1985. ISBN 3-540-96081-3.

This collection of published reports, both positive and negative, on HLA antigen asso-

ciations covers more than 600 diseases, ranging from arthritis to zinc concentrations in red blood cells. Compiled with the aid of modern computer devices, it is a remarkable and useful addition to the rapidly growing literature on this fascinating topic. If you are about to begin a study on HLA and ingrowing toe nails consult this book first to see whether you have been anticipated (not as far as I could see, but dactylitis has been studied!) What you will find are brief summaries of the state of the art of many diseases, together with all the bibliography, amounting to over 4000 publications. There are introductory chapters on the HLA antigens, nomenclature, and data analysis but only the briefest of sections on possible mechanisms. In summary, this is an exhaustive source of facts but not a monograph. Beg, borrow, or buy it before you launch into an HLA association study and add yet another paper to the existing mountain.

HEATHER M DICK

Notices

Supraregional Assay Service Protein Reference Units Handbook of Clinical Immunochemistry

This handbook is intended as a guide to the services available from the SAS Protein Reference Units. Since the establishment of the Supraregional Assay Service in 1974 the range of assays available at, and the number of requests made of, the SAS Protein Reference Units has increased considerably. Certain assays have been devolved to regional or district laboratories and new assays have been added to the repertoire. In addition to describing the assays available from the Units under the SAS, the handbook also describes the clinical indications for assays devolved from the SAS and the assays currently under development, which may be added to the repertoire in the future. Later sections describe the external quality assessment services that are available to laboratories doing immunochemistry and calibrants available from public source.

Copies (£6.00 inclusive of postage) are available from: The Director, Protein Reference Unit, Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield S10 2JF.