Molten gold was poured down his throat until his bowels burst.

We were intrigued by the paper of van de Groot et al describing the pathology of forced ingestion of molten metal; however, we were concerned to note that at least one of the references was from a very dubious source. The statement that this method of execution was used by both the Romans and the Spanish Inquisition is supported by a single reference. This is an excerpt from JA Wylie’s History of Protestantism, a polemic published in 1878, and has been accessed via a website (www.reformation.org), find the paper that interested you, and send your response via email by clicking on the “eletters” option in the box at the top right hand corner.

Providing it isn’t libellous or obscene, it will be posted within seven days. You can retrieve it by clicking on “read eletters” on our homepage.

The editors will decide as before whether to also publish it in a future paper issue.

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References
The book comprises eight parts ranging from the aetiology of ovarian cancer through to the natural history and pathology, tumour biology, prevention and screening, diagnostic techniques and prognostic factors, surgical treatment and organisation of care, adjuvant and palliative treatment, and novel treatments for the future. Within each of these parts there are multiple chapters, resulting in 55 chapters in total. This results in an extremely comprehensive review of a rapidly developing field.

Purely pathological chapters included are “The pathology of epithelial ovarian cancer”, “The pathology of borderline ovarian malignancy”, “Primary non-epithelial ovarian cancers”, and “Metastases in the ovary”. The pathology chapters, although of necessity brief, are concise and surprisingly detailed, and we especially enjoyed the chapter on “Pathology of borderline ovarian malignancy”. On a slight downside, but something that does not detract from the overall quality of the book, all the histological photomicrographs are black and white, there are no gross photographs, and in the chapter on “Primary non-epithelial ovarian cancers” there are no photomicrographs. However, this is not meant to be a detailed pathology textbook and, as already stated, these factors do not detract from the overall quality of the book.

The authors state that this publication is aimed at clinicians and researchers in the field of ovarian cancer. As far as pathologists are concerned, most with a major interest in gynaecological pathology will find this book useful, especially for background reading. We feel that this book will also be of particular benefit to pathology trainees preparing for MRCPath examinations and to those undertaking research into aspects of ovarian cancer. This book would be a useful addition to the library of any pathology laboratory.

M Scott, W G McCluggage

Practical Urologic Cytopathology


This book extensively covers the diagnostic and prognostic features of primary and secondary tumours of the urinary tract from the cytological point of view. The text combines recent and classic definitions, particularly in the classification of urothelial neoplasms. New advances in molecular biology, and the use of biomarkers and special techniques for the detection of urothelial cancer are detailed. Other featured topics include fine needle aspiration cytology of urinary tract neoplasms.

The book has three elements that will be very much appreciated by the readers. The first is the 300 colour photomicrographs that illustrate in detail each chapter. All the images are of very good quality. They enable even inexperienced people to obtain the proper information about the cytological features of the lesions being described. The second is the tables that accurately summarise the details of each chapter. The third is the “boxes” in which the pieces of information included in the corresponding chapters are detailed in a comprehensive manner.

My personal evaluation is such that this is an excellent book for cytopathologists and histopathologists. In fact, the information contained in the book is undoubtedly more abundant and more accurate than that included in standard cytopathology textbooks. In addition, this book will be appreciated by urologists and oncologists. Both will find all they need to know about urological cytopathology from a very practical point of view. I suggest that this book should also be read by pathology residents so that they can obtain the necessary background on the cytological features of neoplastic and non-neoplastic lesions of the bladder.

R Montironi


Another addition to the Methods in Molecular Biology series and this one does exactly what it says on the cover. Although basically a recipe book, it has a useful introduction that succinctly describes a range of applications for the reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) and the major practical points of its undertaking. In addition, there are brief reviews of current methodologies for quantitative RT-PCR and also the detection and quantitation of hepatitis C virus RNA—clinically and commercially—one of the most important applications of RT-PCR. The rest of the volume, reasonably enough, is given over to specific protocols. There are sections covering RNA detection and various quantitation methods, and others concerning mRNA in situ localisation and its differential expression (of particular importance in the study of malignancy). If you have the talent and the inclination you may be interested in the applications of RT-PCR for genetic analysis, immunology, antisense technology, and cDNA cloning. Theoretically, all chapters provide more or less sufficient information for any reasonably skilful scientist to reproduce the results, although actually this is often down to personal flair. Diagrams are sometimes provided; many of them are comprehensible. Sadly, the section concerning the detection of RNA viruses is confined to hepatitis C, although I suppose the trick is to extrapolate the techniques to other viruses. Oddly, the section referring to in situ localisation includes a protocol for the detection of Mycobacterium paratuberculosis DNA with never a mention of RNA, let alone RT-PCR. The obvious appeal of this volume is to nervous neophytes attempting RT-PCR for the first time, or more practised groups or individuals wishing to widen their horizons. In addition, the generally clear and concise introductions, to the book itself and to each protocol, provide useful explanations for those bewildered by the molecular biology techniques they may find mentioned in the literature.

J Mitchell

UK NEQAS for Blood Coagulation

Annual Scientific Meeting

10–11 June 2003, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK

Further details: Timothy AL Woods, UK NEQAS for Blood Coagulation, Rutledge News, 3 Southbourne Road, Sheffield S10 2QN, UK. (Tel: +44 (0)114 267 3300; Fax: +44 (0)114 267 3309; Email: talwoods@coagepa.demon.co.uk)

Fourth International Symposium on Hormonal Carcinogenesis

21–25 June 2003, Palau de la Musica, Valencia, Spain

Further details: Tanordia Price/Dr Jonathananthan J Li, Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology and Therapeutics, Mail Stop 1018, University of Kansas Medical Center, 3901 Rainbow Blvd, Kansas City, KS 66160-7417, USA. (Tel: +1 913 588 4744; Fax: +1 913 588 4740; Email: tprice@kumc.edu; Website: http://www.kumc.edu/hormonecancers)

UK NEQAS for Leucocyte Immunophenotyping

Annual Scientific Meeting

24–25 June 2003, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK

Further details: June Pidd, UK NEQAS for Leucocyte Immunophenotyping, Rutledge News, 3 Southbourne Road, Sheffield S10 2QN, UK. (Tel: +44 (0)114 267 3600; Fax: +44 (0)114 267 3601; Email: ukneqasl@btconnect.com)

Practical Pulmonary Pathology

22–25 July, 2003, Brompton Hospital, London, UK

Further details: Professor B Corrin, Brompton Hospital, London SW3 6NP, UK. (Fax: +44 (0)20 7351 8293; Email: b.corrin@ic.ac.uk)

ACP Management Course for Pathologists, 2003

10–12 September 2003, Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgfield, County Durham, UK

Further details: Ms Valerie Wood, ACP Central Office, 189 Dyke Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 1TL, UK. (Tel: +44 01273 775700; Fax: +44 01273 773303; Email: Valerie@Pathologists.org.uk)
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