Book reviews

Atlas of Cerebrospinal Fluid Cells. By H. W. Kölmel. (Pp. 124; illustrated; DM98, \$40.20.) Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer-Verlag. 1976.

This book contains many excellent photographs but the text is by no means of the same standard. Translation from German has introduced some unintentional neologisms and some inaccuracies in the use of English words. For example, 'bacteriophage' is used as an alternative to 'phagocyte', instead of to describe a virus which attacks bacteria.

In the main the author's intention is not obscured, but a much more serious defect is the quality of the information. An illustration of this can be taken from the brief section on leukaemic infiltration of the central nervous system, which contains statements like 'Myeloid characteristics such as Auer bodies . . . are usually absent in acute lymphoblastic leukaemias'.

A number of readily detectable errors regarding leukaemic infiltration, about which considerable experience has been accumulated in recent years, casts some doubt on the reliability of the sections on rarer or less familiar cytological problems.

This is a great pity since it is possible that valuable experience of primary CNS tumours—for which an atlas would be welcome—will thereby be ignored.

BERYL JAMESON

Multiplication and Division in Mammalian Cells. (Biochemistry of Disease Series, Volume 6.) By Renato Baserga. (Pp. xii + 239; illustrated; SFr. 78.00.) New York and Basel: Marcel Dekker. 1976.

The observational art and science of morbid anatomy may seem to many of its practitioners a long way from the world of molecular biology, though clinical chemists may fall under its shadow. For this book Baserga acts as a guide taking biologists and pathologists on a tour of the hypotheses and evidence about the control of cells.

The author is gifted with a style of writing that is clear, logical, and a pleasure to read. He builds on things familiar to help to explain matters that extend to the boundaries of current knowledge. No doubt much of his material will find its way into undergraduate and postgraduate teaching courses. The book reviews biochemistry of the cell cycle, activation of genes, the role of chromosomal proteins,

and the way post-transcriptional controls may modify the function of cells. In its closing chapters the theme is distilled and applied to the triad of hyperplasia, hyper trophy, and cancer upon which much of histopathology is based.

This is a gem of a book that will be a source of joy and enlightenment to all those who wish to learn more about how the mysteries of cell behaviour are being revealed by contemporary science.

E. H. COOPER

The Principles and Practice of Diagnostic Enzymology. By J. Henry Wilkinson. (Pp. xvi + 592; illustrated; £17.50.) London: Edward Arnold. 1976.

It is 14 years since Professor Wilkinson's *Introduction to Diagnostic Enzymology* and six years since his *Isoenzymes* were published. Because of the absence of a satisfactory, up-to-date substitute this book has been awaited eagerly. It has not let us down.

The book is divided into two parts. In Part I the author outlines the essentials of elementary enzymology and follows this discussion with chapters on the chemistry of individual enzymes and the clinical importance of their assay. There is a short discussion of the principles of methods of estimation and of some of the problems of their standardization and quality control. Part II is multi-author and mainly deals with the use of enzyme assays in investigating disease of individual organ systems. Most of the authors, while being fairly comprehensive, help the general reader by making a critical selection of useful tests: particularly good in this respect are the chapters by Dr Rosalki on diseases of skeletal muscle and of liver.

Criticisms are minor and few. Dr Moss, in a good chapter on bone disease, quotes phosphatase activities in King-Armstrong units only and, despite his own warnings, Professor Wilkinson occasionally gives International Units without stating the temperature of the reaction: mostly he follows the safer practice of giving multiples of the upper 'normal' limit. The chapter on congenital enzyme abnormalities by Raine and Westwood is, inevitably, little more than a list: such a huge subject cannot be adequately covered in the space, and it might have been wiser to keep the useful bibliography but to deal in greater depth with such selected topics as Professor Ryman's chapter on glycogen storage disease.

The most important criticism of this

book is the price, over which authors have little control. As Bernard Levin said, 'the economics of publishing is like the peace of God in that it passeth all understanding', and medical publishing is no exception. However, because this book is a must for all trainee and trained chemical pathologists and for most clinicians, every departmental or hospital library should have at least one copy; the rich should buy a copy for themselves.

JOAN F. ZILVA

Clinical and Biochemical Aspects of Lactic Acidosis. By Robert D. Cohen and H. Frank Woods. (Pp. xii + 276; illustrated; £10.50.) Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Melbourne: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1976.

Lactic acidosis is being increasingly recognized since its elucidation by Huckabee 15 years ago. In this excellent monograph, a physician and a pharmacologist survey current knowledge and their own experience of the biochemistry and clinical features.

They classify as type A the traditional variety, due to hypoxia and lack of tissue perfusion. The main theme is type B, lactic acidosis of other origins, which is considered fully with an analysis of published causes. These are divided into (1) diabetes, liver disease, and other serious diseases (2) phenformin, fructose, and other drugs (3) hereditary.

The authors present a detailed study of the theories of overproduction and of underutilization in causing type B lactic acidosis and are critical of many claims made for miscellaneous drugs.

The book is necessary reading for all chemical pathologists and will be a useful purchase for those with clinical responsibilities. It is well produced with few errors of terminology.

D. N. BARON

Infection and Immunology in the Rheumatic Diseases. Edited by D. C. Dumonde. (Pp. xxvi + 692; illustrated; £33.50.) Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Melbourne: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1976.

This book is made up of short articles based on papers given at an international symposium held on the title subject in March 1974 and organized jointly by the World Health Organisation and the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council. The main attraction of this book is to bring