invoked to assist in diagnosis, a range of various host factors that may predispose to infection extending from hair-line skull fracture to sickle-cell disease, and abnormalities of the complement system. Modern techniques, such as brain scanning, angiography, cisternography, electroencephalography as well as fluorescent-antibody tests, countercurrent immunoelectrophoresis, Limulus lysate test, Nitro-blue tetrazolium test, autoradiography, and procedures for detecting bacterial antigen in CSF and serum, are referred to in the appropriate sections.

Each chapter discusses complications and prognosis and gives recommendations about treatment while the general editors admit that this aspect of the handbook may not meet the approval of all readers and is the part of the book that is likely to become outdated quickest. Not every chapter gives a detailed account of gross and histopathology when pyogenic organisms are being considered, otherwise the charge of repetition would have been made, with justification. The chapter on the neurological sequelae to pertussis infection and immunisation was studied with care in view of the current situation and was considered to be a well-balanced presentation of the facts, and indeed this chapter contained more references to pathology than some other chapters. Because the conditions are particularly uncommon in the UK now, and seldom fatal, the reviewer was particularly attracted to the chapters on brucellosis, leptospirosis, and leprosy. Indeed, the chapter on leprosy is the only one in this volume to use electron micrographs.

Most of the authors are American and clinicians, but Europe and India are also represented; all write clearly and with authority. It is a worthwhile reference book on topics of which it is becoming more and more difficult for any one clinician (or even unit or department) to acquire much experience, at least in the UK. Very nearly all illustrations are of high quality and enhance the text. The reference lists are full yet selective.

This volume fills a very useful place in the series and, in conjunction with the other two volumes still to be published, No. 34 on viral and rickettsial diseases and No. 35 on all other classes of infectious organisms, should make a valuable trio in their coverage of the field of infections. The volume is expensive even by present-day standards although it has a 'de luxe' presentation, and while each volume is a 'handbook', it is rather

erroneous to title the whole series in this way, when an encyclopaedia is being provided.

J. F. BOYD

Fibrinolysis: Current Fundamental and Clinical Concepts. Edited by P. J. Gaffney and S. Balkuv-Ulutin. (Pp. x + 240; illustrated; £9.50.) London, New York, San Francisco: Academic Press. 1978.

This modestly priced book provides a wealth of basic information on fibrinolytic mechanisms and the pathological changes in disease states. The physiology and biochemistry of natural and synthetic activators and inhibitors, the interactions of plasmin with fibrinogen and fibrin, and the catabolism of fibrinogen and its breakdown products comprise the first section of the book. This is followed by chapters on pathological alterations of fibrinolysis in clinical situations, including inflammation, disseminated intravascular coagulation, pregnancy, cancer, and renal disease. While clinically applied, these reviews emphasise fundamental concepts and recent research findings. Thrombolytic therapy with urokinase and streptokinase is also briefly reviewed.

This book will be of considerable value to basic scientists, clinicians, and pathologists working on fibrinolysis. It is not for the trainee or general reader. While most of the book is based on a 1977 symposium held in Istanbul, the contributors and editors have succeeded in making it more broadly based to provide a compact but informative review of current research activity in this important subject.

J. STUART

Manual of Basic Neuropathology, 2nd edition. By R. Escourolle and J. Poirier (Translated by L. J. Rubinstein). (Pp. xiii + 242; illustrated; £8.50.) London: W. B. Saunders. 1978.

First published in France in 1971, the English version of the book, which was favourably received, appeared in 1973. The second edition of this paperbacked, moderately priced, and somewhat enlarged book is therefore welcomed.

The original format has been retained, though inevitably with the growth of knowledge fairly extensive changes have had to be made to the text. There are now 11 chapters that adequately deal with the principal lesions of the nervous system, an appendix that outlines neuropathological

techniques with additional information on muscle, peripheral nerve, and brain biopsies, a short bibliography of recommended textbooks and monographs, and a full index that gives both the page and figure numbers.

Whereas some of the chapters have been restructured and only slightly modified, the updating of those on infectious diseases and genetically determined metabolic diseases due to enzyme defects has required that they be rewritten. Even so, only those recent advances in neurobiology that have helped to elucidate basic processes in neuropathology have been included. Regrettably, there has been a tendency not to include some of the better established functional changes that occur in association with intracranial disease. For example, the opportunity might have been taken to devote a separate chapter to the pathophysiology of raised intracranial pressure. This would have been preferable to the classification of rare disorders simply for the sake of completeness.

The air of mysticism that not infrequently surrounds neuropathology is due in part to its 'highly specialised nature'. This unfortunate state of affairs has been part fostered by the lack of a suitable book that has bridged the gap between a chapter in a standard textbook and the specialised reference books. This manual helps to fill the gap, and there seems little doubt that its continuing popularity will stem from the clarity of its presentation, the high-quality illustrations, and the liberal use of flow and line diagrams. This book is highly recommended for general pathologists and as a primer for neurologists, neurosurgeons, and neuropathologists in training.

D. L. GRAHAM

Steroid Contraception and the Risk of Neoplasia. Report of a WHO Scientific Group. World Health Organization Technical Report Series No. 619. (Pp. 54; \$3.00.) Geneva: World Health Organization. 1978.

This short report is a great contrast to many of the other publications in this series; it contains a very clear review of the risk to women from the use of steroid contraception. This is based upon published case reports and epidemiological studies.

There is a brief introduction, which includes a discussion of some of the

relevant epidemiological concepts and indicates the pitfalls in the interpretation of observational data. (This is a particular problem with this topic, as a controlled trial of contraception is generally considered impracticable.)

The main review consists of three sections dealing with combined and progestogen-only contraceptives, and oestrogens used for non-contraceptive purposes. These sections are clearly laid out and incorporate a critical judgment of each reported study (emphasising the problems in the interpretation of the results). Some unpublished work is also reviewed, thus ensuring that the text is up to date.

There is a short section that deals with the relevance of present studies to developing countries; finally, a series of recommendations for further research are listed.

The report is short and easily read and its contents are absorbed in an evening; it is recommended to anyone wishing to gain an overview of steroid contraception carcinogenesis derived from the epidemiological literature.

M. R. ALDERSON

Technical Aids to Microbiology. By R. E. Trotman. (Pp. iv + 89; illustrated; £4.95.) London: Edward Arnold. 1978.

Although the microbiologist's mailbag is frequently filled with advertisements for various technological aids, little literature exists to help with their technical evaluation. Dr Trotman is uniquely placed to write on this topic, being a bio-engineer with a considerable experience of microbiology, and his monograph is the first available collected work on the subject.

The four sections describe the use of pipetting, dispensing, and inoculating devices for bacterial growth and inhibition tests, devices for enumerating bacteria, for distribution of chemically clean fluids, and for spreading cultures. The non-mechanically-minded will find the text suitably supplemented with some admirable illustrations.

The author's personality is firmly imprinted on the book. He restricts his descriptions to apparatus that he has tested (in some cases invented) or that he considers potentially useful; and he describes the relevant literature with personal comments attached. The scene that emerges is hopeful—a wide range of

instruments is available—but tinged with a little sadness since many do not work as well as might be hoped.

Dr Trotman's book contains an invaluable set of references and plenty of food for thought. It is concise and easy to read, and also so refreshingly cheap that it deserves to be on all laboratory bookshelves.

S. W. B. NEWSOM

Clinical, Biochemical and Haematological Reference Values in Normal Experimental Animals. By B. M. Mitruka and H. M. Rawnsley (Pp. xiv + 272; illustrated; £18.25.) Tunbridge Wells: Abacus Press. 1977.

This book attempts to summarise the available haematological and biochemical values in the commonly used laboratory animals; many new data are also included. A large section consists of tabulated values and these should prove to be a useful source of information.

The chapter dealing with materials and methods describes sampling techniques for the various laboratory species. Several of these are likely to lead to considerable stressing of the animal or are impractical or hazardous to the operator. For example, the method described for blood sampling cats is to wrap the animal in a towel and cut the ear or tail tip—no mention is made of cephalic vein venepuncture, which is a commonly used procedure. In the account of techniques for blood sampling monkeys, no warning is given of the potential microbiological hazards of handling simians or their tissues. Various haematological laboratory methods are also included, and the microscopic appearance of the blood cells in the various species is described, but there are no illustrations. The book, which has no index, closes with an extensive list of references.

Although there are more useful publications describing sampling methods and restraint of animals, the haematological and biochemical data alone make this a useful publication for reference.

P. A. FLECKNELL

Gynecologic Cytopathology: A Color Atlas of Differential Diagnosis. By Marie Luise Schneider and Hans-Joachim Staemmler. (Pp. xii + 187; illustrated; £24.50.) Eastbourne: Holt-Saunders. 1977.

This atlas beautifully illustrates the

cytological diagnosis of uterine carcinoma and related lesions. 'Endocrine cytology' is not included; not even the normal range of postmenopausal patterns is presented for comparison. There are no photographs of histological sections.

Cytological terms are not always chosen carefully, for instance the use of 'syncytium' for a cluster of cells with indistinct cell borders. In discussing supposedly precancerous states, there is the usual problem. Cells from cases of dysplasia are called 'dysplastic cells', while those from carcinoma in situ are 'atypical cells', 'immature cells', or 'cells of carcinoma in situ type'. This particular difficulty is not the fault of the authors and they wisely refrain from speaking of 'malignant cells' or 'carcinoma cells' in the absence of invasion.

This is not a textbook: its intention is to present colour photographs for teaching and for the clarification of differential diagnosis. This it achieves, but it is more expensive than some of its competitors.

A. I. SPRIGGS