nized today'. If undue verbosity is a fault, pithiness can also be taken to extremes. Moreover, despite journal editors' constant exhortations that figures and tables should be self-explanatory, it is too much to hope that many of these can be reproduced out of context without additional explanation. For example, the figure reproduced on page 232 does not even indicate what is being measured or for what purpose. It is inadmissible to reproduce pages of data from various sources and simply preface these with the remark (page 217) that 'the use of the antigen-antibody reaction to identify antigen and to demonstrate or titer antibody for diagnostic or epidemiological purposes is so well known that it does not require discussion', a philosophy to which the editor rigidly adheres.

Thus there are few departments which would make this book their first choice of immunological textbook. Tyros will find little guidance in distinguishing between the practical and arcane, or between the lasting and the already discarded. More experienced staff are quite capable of finding and evaluating the original sources themselves. On the assumption that few departments use coffee tables for ornamental purposes or seek succour for idle lecturers, individuals and libraries are recommended that they can probably find better ways of spending £43.50.

A. M. DENMAN

Atlas of Liver Biopsies. By H. Poulsen and P. Christoffersen. (Pp. 239; illustrated; D.Kr.350.10.) Copenhagen: Munksgaard International Publishers. 1979.

This is yet another addition to the already numerous books on liver biopsy but it justifies itself by a wide range of well-chosen, high-quality microphotographs and an accompanying text which is both lucid and authoritative. Normal appearances are well illustrated, and on this base individual light microscopical lesions are described. This approach is akin to that of the traditional clinical textbook, which describes how to elicit particular physical signs. It should prove popular with those preparing for examinations. A final section describes the combination of such individual histological features in major liver diseases.

This is a splendid book which should be in the departmental library of each laboratory with trainee pathologists, with perhaps another copy for the consultant's

own bench. There are sure to be further editions, and the opportunity can then be taken to correct some minor eccentricities in the spelling.

G. SLAVIN

Immunologically Mediated Renal Diseases: criteria for diagnosis and treatment. Edited by Robert T. McCluskey and Giuseppe A. Andres. (Pp. viii + 112; illustrated; S.Fr. 34.00.) New York and Basel: Marcel Dekker Inc. 1978.

This small volume is the summary of a conference held in Buffalo, New York attended by many leading American authorities on renal disease. It is unusual, to say the least, for a work purporting to give criteria for renal biopsy diagnosis to appear without a single photomicrograph. Yet in spite of this handicap the book does contain a useful up-to-date summary of knowledge although it does not entirely fulfil its declared aim of providing a satisfactory classification of human glomerulonephritis. It does highlight the difficulty of making a diagnosis in conditions such as anaphylactoid purpura and focal glomerulosclerosis on purely histological evidence, and the importance of employing immunofluorescent techniques and electron microscopy on all renal biopsies is emphasised. There is a useful list of references. The book is not cheap even by the standards of today.

M. S. DUNNILL

Recent Advances in Infection. No. 1. Edited by David Reeves and Alasdair Geddes. (Pp. 226; illustrated; £11.00.) Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone. 1979.

This first volume of a new series entitled *Recent Advances in Infection* is most welcome. The editors have assembled 14 papers of a consistently high standard, each being comprehensive and a valuable source of references.

Antibiotics receive much attention. A thorough account of recent trends of antibiotic resistance in specific organisms is given by Ayliffe. Even as reviews are published, however, new information becomes available, and the attribution of multiple resistance in *Streptococcus pneumoniae* to plasmids now seems less certain (Robins-Brown *et al.*, 1979). New antibiotics are reviewed by Balland Geddes and aminoglycoside pharmacology by Professor Mawer. The latter author

dismisses aminoglycoside nephrotoxicity as 'difficult to assess', but others might disagree.

An insight into the construction and management of hospital antibiotic policies is given by Professor Phillips. The good effect of problem-orientated antibiotic policies is aptly shown by recounting the history of the policies adopted against resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* at St Thomas' Hospital.

There are comprehensive accounts of the methods available for rapid detection of bacterial antigens and on the diagnosis of fungal infections. Two chapters cover recent advances in the pathogenesis of bacterial diarrhoea. The role of chlamydia in non-gonococcal urethritis is well championed by Ridgway, and Joan Stokes nicely defines the purposes of quality control and gives examples of how it has improved laboratory procedures.

These and other topics demonstrate the breadth of subjects in this volume. The editors will succeed in their intention of expanding an interest in infection among different disciplines, and this book is essential reading for anyone who wishes to keep up to date in clinical and laboratory aspects of infection. Readers will look forward to later volumes of the series.

P. SANDERSON

Reference

Robins-Brown, R. M., *et al.* (1979). Resistance mechanisms of multiply resistant pneumococci: antibiotic degradation studies. *Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy*, 15, 470-74.