same samples. This may be secondary to the lability of the diazonium staining reagent between the experimental and control plates that could randomly bias the results. We need to adopt a more sophisticated approach. An immunological technique, independent of enzymatic activity could be far more rewarding.

We would also like to clarify and amend our conclusion and summary. From our original random cases we determined that the ultrafast isoenzyme may be a true isoenzyme. However, it was the *band* in the ultrafast region seen on electrophoresis which may or may not have indicated the presence of a true isoenzyme and at times it appeared to be an artefact that we observed most commonly in our limited study associated with neoplastic

liver disease.

In conclusion, we are not sure of the definite existence of an ultrafast isoenzyme although we have demonstrated suggestive evidence of its existence on a number of occasions. It has remained elusive despite our attempts to study it further. It may be that bilirubin effectively competes for the diazonium reagent thereby preventing detectable expression of enzymatic activity, especially when only small quantities of enzyme may be released in patients with liver disease. Additionally, small quantities of enzyme might not be detected secondary to the intensity of the non-enzymatic reaction. We feel that the ultrafast band is non-specific in that it may be seen in patients with benign and malignant liver disease and may well be artefactual as

Hardin's study suggested. At this time no definitive association between the ultrafast band and a specific disease entity can be made.

J KOETT

PL WOLF

Department of Pathology,
University of California Medical Center,
San Diego University Hospital,
San Diego,
California 92103, USA

Reference

- ¹ Koett J, Wolf PL. Clinical significance of an ultrafast alkaline phosphatase isoenzyme. *J Clin Pathol* 1979;32:1286-92.

The opinions or assertions herein are the private views of the authors and are not to be construed as official or as reflecting the views of the US Department of Defense or the Department of the Navy.

Book reviews

Histological Typing of Prostate Tumours. International histological classification of tumours. No 22. Ed FK Mostofi. (Pp 25; 64 colour photomicrographs; Sw Fr 109.) WHO Geneva. 1980.

The most useful part of this book is the Introduction where carcinoma of the prostate is identified as (a) clinical, (b) occult, and (c) incidental (subclinical). It would be helpful if some such standard classification were employed. However, latent carcinoma—a popular term in Britain—is mentioned only in passing as applying to cancers found at autopsy. This is perverse and illogical and may undermine the credibility of the proposals. The more detailed histological classification and the accompanying photomicrographs are not very helpful and in particular offer no help in that common diagnostic dilemma the 'incidental' ('latent') carcinoma.

The illustrations are classical examples of recognised conditions and contribute little to the standardisation of nomenclature which is the object of these publications. I think this is one of the less valuable volumes in this series.

HM CAMERON

Haemophili in Medical Literature. DC Turk. (Pp 96; £6.50.) Hodder & Stoughton. 1980.

This bibliography on the haemophili consists of a list of books and review articles with an indication of their

contents followed by a list of more than 1200 references, largely recent but ranging from 1883 to 1978. Even more valuable is an index clearly and minutely categorising the references into 37 subject headings and numerous sub groups. The instructions on the use of the index are readily mastered. This most useful piece of scholarship must be of the greatest value to those working with the haemophili.

GL GIBSON

Virus and the Liver. Eds L Bianchi, W Gerok, K Sickinger, GA Stalder. (Pp 424; illustrated; £24.95.) MTP Press Limited. 1980.

The proceedings and discussions during the three days of the 5th International Congress of Liver Diseases in October, 1979, give a detailed picture of the state of knowledge at that time. It is well presented and well edited, containing much which is stimulating. The coverage is broad, with more attention to the liver, to pathogenetic, clinical, and epidemiological aspects than to the viruses as such although these are well and concisely dealt with. The sessions dealt respectively with virology, viral and host antigens, pathology and immunology, clinical pathology and epidemiology (with a salutary reminder that fulminating hepatitis, from which deaths in the acute stage result, affects only 1/1000 patients with acute viral hepatitis irrespective of whether due to hepatitis A, B or "non-A non-B"). The last session dealt with therapy

(preventing or treating complications appears more helpful than antiviral measures at present), a discussion of prophylaxis and the possible role of vaccines against hepatitis B, and lastly a fine summary by Dame Sheila Sherlock followed by the latest hepatitic poem by HJ Alter. Each session contains from four to ten papers, discussions are effectively recorded, and useful summaries with wise comments conclude the sessions. In such a rapidly evolving field symposium proceedings are inevitably of ephemeral value but this is certainly one of the better ones and contains information fully commensurate with its price.

NR GRIST

Malignant Lymphoproliferative Diseases. Ed JG van den Tweel. (Pp 507; illustrated; 145 guilders.) Martinus Nijhoff. 1980.

Malignant Lymphoproliferative Diseases is a compilation of papers presented at a Boerhaave course organised by the University of Leiden, Holland, early in 1979. The justification for books of this kind lies in the presentation of new material from a number of well established experts in the field in a readable and convenient format. In these interests, poor printing and editorial lapses which characterise this type of publication can often be excused but this book is appearing almost two years after the course with the result that much of the material is no longer new and much that is of current interest, for example, the application of monoclonal

antibodies, is not to be found in this volume. While to some extent this reflects the extreme rapidity of developments in lymphoma research a number of the contributions in this book are in substance reprints of papers previously published some three years ago. There are exceptions to this and in particular the first two chapters on normal lymphoid tissue and B and T-cell differentiation are outstanding. Unfortunately subsequent contributions on lymphoma classification do not build on this excellent beginning. The book is directed at the pathologist with a special interest in malignant lymphoma who will find it worthwhile perusing in the library and useful as a source of reference.

P ISAACSON

Benchbook on Brucella. L Robertson, ID Farrell, PM Hinchcliffe and RA Quaife. Public Health Laboratory Service. Monograph Series 14. (Pp 45; illustrated; £3.) HMSO. 1980.

This clearly presented and concisely written manual will be particularly valuable in the laboratory and very useful for clinicians. The introduction provides a concise account of the disease's prevalence and the diagnostic difficulties. The safeguards recommended to avoid laboratory infections are stressed and the merits of the alternative diagnostic techniques are described clearly, with an explanation of any change from conventional practice. The value of marrow culture is emphasised. Few would use the recommended antibiotic cocktail in blood cultures as usually these are part of a PUO investigation. The information that antigens and control sera can be obtained from the PHLS is welcome.

KB ROGERS

Practical Immunology. 2nd ed. L Hudson and FC Hay. (Pp 359; illustrated; £10.) Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1980.

The second edition of this practical immunology bench book should prove as useful as the first particularly to Ph D students. The style is easy to follow and concise, and stepwise instructions clearly indicated for each procedure.

The background of the authors in experimental immunology is reflected in much of the book. Even the initial chapter on the preparation of "basic" reagents and

basic techniques refers to keyhole limpet haemocyanin and the preparation of hapten-carrier conjugates—reagents unfamiliar to most workers in the clinical field. The chapter on hybridoma technology emphasises the need to keep in step with the latest bandwagon. Nevertheless those working in clinical laboratories will find much of practical value in this book even if they do not feel up to raising their own monoclonal antibodies. They will need to be selective and have some idea of what they are doing in the first place. It may be irritating not to be able to find a supplier for some essential reagents. I suppose everyone should know how to obtain Chloramine T, but where do you get L-929 cells and EMC virus if you wished to set up a test for interferon? However at £10 for some 300 pages it represents good value.

RA THOMPSON

Vasculitis. Ed K Wolff and RK Winkelmann. (Pp 338; illustrated; £20.) Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd. 1980.

Vasculitis is of importance to workers in many disciplines and this volume is the report of the Fourth International Clinical Symposium of the European Society for Dermatological Research. Although the major emphasis of the papers relates to dermatology, a large part of the book is concerned with more general aspects of the pathogenesis of vasculitis and this will be of most interest to pathologists. The quality of the articles is variable and some of them have translated to the written page less well than others. However, overall the book presents an opportunity to bring oneself reasonably up to date. It is a book to recommend to the librarian rather than to purchase as a laboratory bench book.

G SLAVIN

Rapid Virus Diagnosis: Application of Immunofluorescence. 2nd ed. PS Gardner and I McQuillin. (Pp 317; illustrated; £29.) Butterworths. 1980.

This new and improved edition deals in critical detail with immunofluorescence in the field of clinical virology. The enthusiasm of its authors is well balanced by the maturity of experience: full recognition is given to the exacting demands of these techniques with clear signposts to the main pitfalls. The

writers repeatedly emphasise the decisive importance of high quality specific reagents, quality controlled before and fully controlled during use.

Five chapters describe the principles and details of the methods and their interpretation. Twelve chapters review the applications of immunofluorescence to important groups of viruses, including accounts of the viruses to which the authors have devoted such close and sustained attention. Chapter 18 discusses the complexities and problems of detecting virus-specific IgM which is bedevilled with traps for even experienced workers. The final chapter discusses the application of the methods to clinical virology in general.

Immunofluorescence has established itself a sure place among the rapid techniques of clinical virology. This book will be essential for study and reference in laboratories where immunofluorescence is used or being introduced. Its emphasis on meticulous techniques, exacting controls, and cautious validation and interpretation will not mislead the reader into thinking that these methods provide easy short-cuts to diagnostic virology.

NR GREY

Notice

Symposia in Basic Gastroenterology

The Second Symposium in this series entitled "Autonomic nerves of the gut" organised by the Royal Postgraduate Medical School in collaboration with the Medical Department of Glaxo Group Research, will be held in London on 22 September 1981. The organisers are DM Polak, SR Bloom, NA Wright, M Daly. For information, please write to: Dr M Daly, Glaxo Group Research, Ware, Herts SG12 0DJ, England.