The volume contains a wealth of interesting information and a comprehensive bibliography.

Sadly it is a very unattractive publication because of the use of photographic techniques. Do we blame the contributors for not obeying instructions, or the publishers for not instructing? I do not know.

J HUME ADAMS

Interpretation of Liver Biopsies. Richard J Stenger. Biopsy Interpretation Series. (Pp 175; \$42.50.) Raven Press. 1983.

This slim volume is divided into sixteen concise chapters each with about three pages of text, nine half-page black and white illustrations of good quality, and about twenty-five up-to-date and relevant references. The chapter headings are traditional.

The text is well written and provides a lucid account of the basic pathology of liver disease, supplemented by a good range of well-chosen illustrations. It is very concise and few subjects extend beyond a single paragraph. No previous pathological knowledge is implied and throughout, despite the title, the emphasis is descriptive rather than interpretative, giving the impression that the author is showing what can be achieved with a liver biopsy rather than how to achieve it. Of his intended audience I think these qualities should prove ideal for clinicians and trainees in gastroenterology and general medicine. Pathologists, on the other hand, might feel that there is insufficient discussion of morphological problems, especially those concerned with differential diagnosis. This book should fill an important niche as an introduction to liver pathology for clinicians, but it cannot really be recommended as a bench book for pathologists.

DGD WIGHT

Blood Cell Volume Analysis. A New Screening Technology for the Haematologist. RM Rowan. (Pp 97; £5.) Albert Clark & Co. Limited. 1983.

Earlier in this century blood cell size distributions, such as the Price-Jones curve, were in vogue. But the sheer tedium of producing them with a microscope and the

errors involved meant that the technique fell into disuse. The present generation of automated haematological instruments has reversed this process since it is now possible to obtain objective and precise size distributions of red cells, leucocytes, and platelets as part of the routine full blood count. Haematologists will therefore have to re-learn the earlier work and keep abreast of the newer developments. Dr Rowan's book provides an ideal guide. The opening chapter reviews the historical aspects. There is then a detailed account of the Coulter Model S Plus series of instruments followed by three chapters on the application of these counters to red cell, leucocyte, and platelet volume distribution analysis.

I am sure that this work will be constantly used in laboratories with a Coulter Model S Plus. It will also be of value to a wider readership since many of the basic principles are relevant to the other automated blood counters.

JM ENGLAND

Principles and Practice of Surgical Pathology. Vols I and II. Ed Steven G Silverberg. (Pp 1656; £124.50.) John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 1983.

Professor Silverberg's textbook of surgical pathology consists of 1656 pages and is in two volumes. Now there is significant morbidity attached to works in two volumes for they are a source of constant irritation and the latter I believe is atherogenic. The irritation is provoked by getting out of the chair, reaching up to the shelf, pulling down a heavy volume and—you've guessed—its the wrong damned one. Principles and Practice of Surgical Pathology overcomes this hazard by a simple method. On the spine of one volume is written "Below SNOP: 56/SNOMED: 56,000", and on the other "From SNOP: 56/SNOMED 56,000". Assuming you know your SNOP/SNOMED topography you need never open the wrong volume again. Surely a recommendation to purchase this reference work.

Eighty six authors are involved in the 52 chapters, the majority being American. The initial part of the book has some interesting general chapters, for example, the differential diagnosis of metastatic tumours and a chapter on the organisation of the laboratory. It then moves into a more standard format with accounts of pathology

system by system. The largest organ systems are broken up into separate chapters separating either medical from surgical conditions, or neoplastic from non-neoplastic lesions. The book is laid out with two columns to a page but sadly many of the photomicrographs are limited to one column which means many are too small to be of value. It is not therefore a book for those who like to picture match. However, a feature of many of the chapters is the presence of useful lists and charts.

I must confess I have not read these volumes systematically but have kept each by my side during diagnostic reporting for several months and used them as the first source of reference whenever a problem arose. I have been most impressed and always found enough information either to solve the problem or refer me to suitable recent references.

As one cannot keep pace with the ever increasing numbers of specialist titles, comprehensive accounts like these two volumes plug the many holes. Several general textbooks of varying quality are on the market and I think this belongs with those in the first division. If you have the money, Professor Silverberg's textbooks are a good buy that will keep you one jump ahead of any threatening clinician, and using the comprehensive reference list, two jumps.

AB PRITCH

Antibiotic Associated Diarrhoea and Colitis. Ed S Peter Borriello. Developments in Gastroenterology. (Pp 179; £24.25.) Martinus Nijhoff. 1984.

Establishment of the aetiological role of *Cl difficile* in antibiotic-associated pseudomembranous colitis some seven years ago stimulated a great deal of important research, and this is reflected in the ever-growing literature on all aspects of the problem. Now, it is a pleasure to welcome into one's library a definitive monograph on the subject, with major contributors from centres of excellence in the UK, Sweden and the USA.

In his introduction the Editor, Dr SP Borriello, writes that "an attempt has been made to collate the information available on all the different aspects of *Cl difficile* and the gastrointestinal diseases associated with it". The attempt is very successful, for in a mere 150 pages of type-script text the contributors usefully review the literature