nature for 30 minutes. To the tubes are now added 2 drops of 0-5% neutral red in 1% acetic acid. After gentle mixing and five minutes at room temperature a coarselipped wet preparation is scored for the percentage of neutrophils containing blocks of formazan.

We have found that the use of EDTA as an anticoagulant does not alter the correlation with proven bacterial infection provided the sample is tested the same day as collection, but we agree with the normal range (1-15%) given by Freeman and King.

We also agree that 'it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that this test depends on many factors' and would go further to state that its interpretation in a general hospital situation is fraught with difficulty. We have evidence that myeloproliferative disease, severe renal failure, and virus infection may all produce abnormal results.

A. E. GREEN
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Book reviews


This small book is compiled from the lectures given to student technicians in Iowa and intentionally omits specific technical detail, but includes two colour prints depicting red and white cell maturation that are so bad as to be misleading. When will publishers learn to eschew colour prints of artists' impressions of microscope preparations in haematology? It will serve as a useful introduction at sixth-form or Higher National Certificate level and, indeed, contains a wealth of useful technical detail that would do medical students no harm to learn.

It is unfair to compare the cost of American publications with their British counterparts. At $12.75 this book, lacking technical detail, will have an uphill battle on the English market but it can be recommended for technical college libraries and the larger laboratories responsible for running training courses for student technicians.

J. L. STAFFORD


Mental retardation is a subject which is prominent in the thoughts of many people at this time, so the presentation of a second edition of this book by Drs Crome and Stern is especially welcome. The first edition was received enthusiastically by many, and the new volume brings up to date the contents and discussion of the problems involved, as well as widening the field, for many new conditions have been described.

In addition to 13 chapters there are appendices in which a variety of techniques and methods, of nomenclature on chromosomes, and the collection of material for examination are very well described.

The chapters include aspects relating to genetics, perinatal factors, and postnatal causes of disease, as well as general pathological studies. There are discussions on Down's syndrome, the lipidoses and leucodystrophies, aminoacidurias, and a variety of other neurometabolic disorders. There is a most valuable chapter listing briefly the many syndromes (206 of them) with comments listing references, genetic, clinical, and pathological findings.

In all there must be over 3000 authors mentioned whose work has quite obviously been studied and to which reference is made.

Naturally there are a few errors such as the wrong reference to a table and the variability in the use of symbols for the various gangliosides. As is to be expected a few articles which may be of some importance are not quoted.

A remarkable number of unusual, unique cases are discussed, yet few statistics are available giving the relative frequency of the various diseases as found in a routine hospital practice.

This volume can be thoroughly recommended to all interested in this subject, especially to paediatric clinicians and to pathologists of all disciplines.

J. N. CUMINGS


Hodgkin's disease, a condition that is apparently unique to man, has occupied the attention of many of the best pathologists and physicians of the last hundred years. Perhaps we are not much nearer to understanding its cause than was Thomas Hodgkin, but in all other respects knowledge has expanded enormously, especially within the last two decades. In staging and classification the Rye Conference of 1966 was a landmark which should by now be familiar to all pathologists and clinicians who profess to diagnose the disease. For treatment and management the rules are less clearly defined and here there has been even greater progress.

All this, and much besides, is now encompassed in a single, one-author volume by Henry Kaplan. It is an astonishing virtuoso performance, precise yet fluent, detailed but never fussy, and presenting the controversies—on spread of disease and on curability, for example—in an urbane but compelling way. Above all it is authoritative, being the product of first-hand observation and original thought. The excellent tables, diagrams, and illustrations are mostly from the
work of Kaplan and his colleagues. (A
seriously misprinted dose has a cor-
rection slip and seems to be a solitary
error.)

Of course the hazard of a work of this
type is the possibility of personal bias:
Kaplan is known to be an enthusiast who
may on occasion overlook the ill effects
of treatment. Thus when he claims that 'the
incidence of incomplete hematopoietic
recovery after total-lymphoid radio-
therapy alone... has been approximately
1 percent' one is entitled to ask what
constitutes complete recovery and whether
this includes a normal response to
cytoxic drugs. Probably not. Readers
may also wish to see the opposition
view to the theory of lymphatic spread
presented at first hand. If so, they must
wait for the multi-author British volume
on the same topic but may, meanwhile,
wonder whether it can hope to surpass
Kaplan's considerable achievement.

H. E. M. KAY

Hepatitis-Associated Antigen and Viruses
By A. J. Zuckerman. (Pp. approx.
240; illustrated. Dfl. 60.00.) Amsterdam
and London: North-Holland Publish-
ing Co. 1972.

In writing this book Dr Zuckerman has
set himself the ambitious task of pro-
busing both a critical review of the new
extensive hepatitis literature, and an
introduction to the subject within the
confines of a single volume. These aims
are often conflicting and the resulting
compromise lacks balance.

The historical introduction consists
mainly of a translation of Lurman's
classical account of an outbreak of hepa-
titis following smallpox vaccination in
Bremen. This is supplemented by a
catalogue of some of the early obser-
vations, but no attempt is made to
describe the theoretical concepts current
at the time. It is curious to see the rec-
ognition of posttransfusion hepatitis attrib-
uted to the author (1970).

In the chapters about hepatitis as a
disease, clarity has been attained by
great simplification of the issues, and
too often an earlier review by the author
is quoted rather than the original paper.
Scant attention is given to the foreign
language literature.

Rather more than half the book is
concerned with Australia antigen and
this makes interesting reading although
the extended exposition of the work from
the author's group has left insufficient
space for an overall view of current
progress. For instance, a chapter is
dedicated to attempts to grow hepatitis
virus in liver organ cultures at the London
School of Hygiene, but room has not been
found to acknowledge the early work of
Bang in this field.

As might be expected from its price
the book is handsomely presented with
many illustrations but it seems to the
reviewer that the time is not yet ripe for
writing a definitive monograph on this
rapidly moving subject.

YVONNE E. COSSART,

Computer Diagnosis and Diagnostic
Methods: Proceedings of the Second
Conference on the Diagnostic Pro-
xiv + 397; illustrated. $19.75.) Spring-

The 19 read papers in this volume
overlap considerably, except for one by
a C.I.A. statistician on political espionage
rather than the arts of healing. Apart
from the papers by Cornfield and Edwards,
there is much that is pretentious or
completely lacking in medical common-
sense. The main problem discussed is
estimating betting odds that a patient
has a particular disease. They use Bayes'
law, which states that a new independent
piece of evidence, eg, a biochemical
test, multiplies existing odds by a factor
which is called the 'likelihood' of that
evidence for that disease. Since thousands
of different signs, symptoms, and tests
and thousands of diseases are possible,
we must tell a computer millions of
likelihoods before it can use Bayes' law
for us, and allowance for the non-
independence of different bits of evidence
makes things even worse! Except in
differential diagnosis of similar diseases,
this approach is not of practical value.

RICHARD PETO

Manual of Histopathological Staining
Methods By Frederick A. Putt. (Pp.
xxii + 335. £6.20.) New York, Sydney,
and Chichester: John Wiley and Sons

This is a useful book and deserves a
place on the bookshelf in any routine
diagnostic histopathology laboratory. It
contains detailed descriptions of a wide
variety of staining methods. The layout
is extremely clear and each step in each
method is clearly explained thus mini-
izing the chance of error when a stain
is employed for the first time.

M. S. DUNN

Books received

Evaluation of Certain Food Additives
and the Contaminants Mercury, Lead
and Cadmium. Sixteenth Report of the Joint
FAO WHO Expert Committee on Food
Additives. WHO Technical Report Series
No. 505. (Pp. 32. 40p.) Geneva: World
Health Organization. 1972. Available
from HM Stationery Office.

Oculomycoses By Jules Francois and
M. Rysellaere. (Pp. xii + 430; illus-
trated. $34.50.) Springfield, Ill.: Charles

Acute Ureteric Obstruction. A Clinical
and Radiological Study By P. M.
Bretland. (Pp. xv + 219; illustrated.
1972.

Rehabilitation of the Cancer Patient.
A collection of Papers presented at the
45th Annual Clinical Conference on Cance-
rology, 1970, at the University of Texas M.
Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute
at Houston, Houston, Texas. (Pp.
326; illustrated. £9.00.) Chicago: Year
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in UK and Europe by Lloyd-Luke