Book reviews

oratories with examples from his own department.

The author has a set policy, with which few will disagree, for the material he will accept and he has laid down the procedures for investigation and reporting such specimens in order to give meaningful results—with these some microbiologists will inevitably disagree.

The most valuable sections of this book, in the reviewer's opinion, are the sections on quality control, work loads, space, and personnel. Few laboratories will be able to match the system of records for control at all stages of laboratory work and some may consider them unnecessarily exacting but the well set-out information makes the book invaluable for laboratory administrators both medical and technical.

In an attempt to make diagnostic microbiology efficient and accurate, however, Dr Bartlett has disguised the fact that it is also an extremely interesting occupation, and produced a book which resembles an army manual incorporating American laboratory slang.

M. P. JEVONS

Tumors of the Male Genital System. By F. K. Mostofi and Edward B. Price, Jr. (Pp. xiv + 310; illustrated. \$8.00.) Atlas of Tumor Pathology, Second Series. Fascicle 8. Washington, D.C.: Armed Forces Institute of Pathology. 1973.

This fascicle covers tumours of the testis and epididymis, the paratesticular tissues, the prostate, the seminal vesicles, the male urethra, the penis and the scrotum. Not unreasonably, well over half the text is devoted to testicular neoplasms. Introductory paragraphs on the embryology and anatomy of the testis, and on the experimental approach to the histogenesis of testis tumours, are useful.

Problems of nomenclature and classification still plague us. Mostofi and Price discuss the 'British' classification promulgated in 1963, but reject it in favour of their own which is similar to that recently proposed by the World Health Organization. However, the experienced pathologist will have little difficulty in correlating the different classifications, and will find the fascicle of considerable value. On the whole, the illustrations are of good quality, and the text is well written. The inclusion of an index is welcome, as it is in other fascicles of the Second Series. It is unfortunate that proof reading did not eliminate the necessity of an erratum sheet listing seven corrections.

N. F. C. GOWING

Immunohematology Syllabus. By Richard E. Rosenfield. (Pp. iv + 108; illustrated. \$5.75.) New York: Intercontinental Medical Book Corporation. 1974.

This book helps to define where immunohaematology stands in relation to the newly emerged and separate discipline of immunology. The author, an acknowledged expert in this field, sets out to explain in physical and chemical terms many of the biological reactions familiar to blood group serologists. In doing so he takes us near the fringe of knowledge and the less serious reader will find parts of the book rather heavy going.

The case development problems presented at the conclusion of several chapters test the student's comprehension of the preceding text but one has to avoid the temptation of turning the page too quickly to read the expert answer.

Sections dealing with Rh problems will be sadly incomprehensible to many readers in this country as the author often uses a numerical notation system without simultaneous use of the Fisher alternative.

Haematologists, forensic pathologists, obstetricians, and genetic counsellors will find different sections of special interest, and there are a number of very useful tables for future reference. Candidates for the final examination of the MRCPath should read the book, but should not expect to meet many examiners putting questions at this level.

W. J. JENKINS

Needle Biopsy. By Thomas J. Deeley. (Pp. viii + 170; illustrated. £3.50.) London: Butterworths. 1974.

This small book gives details of the design and use of the various needles and trephines which are available for biopsy, including those devised for special sites such as prostate and lung. Prominence is given to the high speed drill apparatus which was developed by the author and which bears his name (Morrison-Deeley drill). The limitations and dangers of the various procedures are adequately discussed. In view of his extensive experience it is of interest to note the author's conclusions regarding the low risk of tumour dissemination along the needle track and to more distant sites. More might have been said about aspiration cytology and the preparation of tissues for electron microscopy because of their increasing use in clinical pathology.

It is evident that the author achieves

considerable success with the drill technique having obtained useful information in 92% of a consecutive series of 500 biopsies with very few false negative results. Further data on the adequacy of needle biopsy are presented for individual tissues and organs but have limited value because of the lack, in many cases, of pathological details and information on follow-up investigations of negative results.

The indications given for biopsy at various sites are mostly incomplete and sometimes misleading. Thus it is stated that jaundice in general rarely merits liver biopsy; it is implied that needle biopsy of cold thyroid nodules is adequate to confirm or exclude malignancy; the list of diseases detectable by liver biopsy includes leprosy but there is no comment on the value of the procedure in distinguishing extra- from intrahepatic obstructive jaundice; the bone biopsy chapter excludes all reference to the assessment of metabolic and endocrine disorders of this tissue; the indications for renal biopsy are discussed in one short paragraph. From these examples it should be evident that the book is only of value to those pathologists who may be concerned in performing biopsies and who require some guidance on available techniques, and to those seeking data on the adequacy of needle biopsy as a diagnostic procedure, mainly in neoplastic conditions.

R. S. PATRICK

The Eye and Its Disorders. By Patrick Trevor-Roper. (Pp. ix + 726; illustrated. £11.00.) Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Melbourne: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1974.

The prototype of this book appeared in 1955 with a second edition in 1962 under the title of 'Ophthalmology: A textbook for diploma students', but unfortunately two years after the appearance of the second edition all the remaining copies of the book were destroyed by a devastating fire in the warehouse of the publishers—Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd, London—and it appears now in a revised form with a new title and different publishers. It is evident, however, that the book retains much of its original style which is of an elegant nature in keeping with the writings of the author in so many aspects of ophthalmology or in related topics, and it is greatly to his credit that such a wealth of information is presented on so many

aspects of ophthalmology—anatomical, physiological, optical, and clinical—in a reasonably compact textbook.

There can be few criticisms. The use of the term 'macula' (which embraces the fovea and parafovea) in the context of squint should be avoided because it is too imprecise, and the distinction between fovea and parafovea when account is taken of the nature of the retinal fixation of the squinting eye is of considerable importance in the assessment of the squint. It is rather gloomy to regard the presence of anomalous retinal correspondence as determining the achievement of only a cosmetic result because anomalous correspondence provides a most useful binocular function with an adequate range of anomalous fusional vergence provided the angle of the residual squint is small and provided also that the vision of each eye is reasonably good. It is worthwhile mentioning the risk of the development of an anterior segment ischaemia when there is an interference with all four (or even three) rectus muscles, as in certain forms of transplant operation. The discussion on congenital nystagmus is confined to the pendular type, but it would be improved by a mention of the jerky type which is very different in its mode of origin and prognosis. It is somewhat surprising to see the tumbling method of intracapsular cataract extraction discussed and illustrated in such detail; it is, of course, a sophisticated procedure but it is doubtful if it should continue to be advocated in view of the widespread use of alpha-chymotrypsin which more or less eliminates the need to rupture the zonule mechanically, and also in view of the widespread reliance on the use of the cryoprobe in the delivery of the lens which would be contraindicated in a tumbling procedure.

KENNETH WYBAR

Low Blood Sugar. By Peter J. Steincrohn. (Pp. xii + 146; illustrated. £2.40.) London: Allison and Busby. 1974.

This book is written, very obviously, for the layman. Its author, according to the dust cover, is 'one of America's best known internists' presumably because he has written no less than 22 other books; hopefully more authoritatively than this one.

Low blood sugar is the latest addition to the rapidly growing literature intended for the general public explaining how all of their vague symptoms from 'fatigue, sudden weakness, headache, tremors,

nightmares, heart palpitations, insomnia, nervousness, nausea, faintness, anxiety, dizziness, irritability, forgetfulness, confusion, depression' through to a host of other symptoms are all due to hypoglycaemia. The type of hypoglycaemia referred to incidentally is not that due to islet cell tumour or any other well recognized cause but that which can be diagnosed only by performing a six-hour glucose test.

The importance of this book to clinical pathologists is that it may help to explain to them why they are beginning to receive so many requests for this tedious procedure which is almost impossible to interpret. If the author of 'Low blood sugar', for example, had read critically even a modicum of the scientific literature, some of it extending back as long as 52 years, he would not have made the mistake of showing, on page 9, a typical 'normal' venous blood sugar curve after oral glucose as one in which postabsorptive blood glucose levels do not fall below the fasting level. My recommendation is do not buy this book but know of its existence.

VINCENT MARKS

Sputum: Fundamentals and Clinical Pathology. Edited by Marucio J. Dulfano. (Pp. xvi + 632; illustrated. \$27.75.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1973.

As the editor of this book points out in his preface, it is more than 50 years since the last attempt was made 'to update comprehensively the numerous advances' made on the subject of sputum. For this reason alone—and it is not the only one—the reader must be grateful to Dr Dulfano for having persuaded 21 contributors to prepare the 15 chapters that make up this book, which gives a broad treatment of the subject of sputum and its constituents.

There are chapters on mucus, its chemical composition, its physical properties, the histochemical features of the mucus-secreting cells and their ultrastructure, the anatomy of the mucociliary apparatus, the mechanisms for lung clearance, on bacteriology, mycology, the cytology of cancer and of non-malignant conditions, special examinations of sputum, and, as well, pharmacological agents and respiratory tract fluid.

It is to be expected that there is some overlap and some gaps and that some chapters are more exhaustive than others. All save one of the chapters are by authors

from the United States. Usually the bibliography is wide. The final chapter on 'Pharmacological agents and respiratory tract fluid' is written by Emeritus Professor S. M. Boyd and is not as broad as its title might suggest in that it is a summary, by one of the pioneers in the field, of over 60 years, based on and confined to the collection of respiratory tract fluid in animals.

It may be invidious to pick out some chapters but a personal choice, based partly on quality, partly on the fact that the material may be less widely or less easily accessible, would include the earlier seven chapters dealing with the newer developments as well as the later one, on sputum proteins, by Masson and Hellemans.

LYNNE RIDD

Modern Trends in Oncology. Part I Research Progress. Part II Clinical Progress. Edited by Ronald W. Raven. The Modern Trends Series. (Pp. Pt I: x + 295; Pt II: xi + 332; illustrated. £7.00 per volume.) London: Butterworth Group. 1973.

The conception of a special field of medicine to study and treat cancer has excited much interest and controversy. Undoubtedly, such a speciality embraces many different aspects of cancer and the practice of 'oncology', as it has come to be called, must therefore involve the co-operation of surgeons, radiotherapists, physicians, and research workers alike.

It is encouraging to see that such co-operation has extended to the publication of this book which, in two volumes covers a wide range of topics. In 28 chapters by 37 contributors, it discusses such subjects as the incidence, epidemiology, immunology, and therapy of individual cancers. It is well illustrated, and each chapter is followed by a liberal collection of references. Inevitably, any single work covering an immense field has omissions. This book is no exception and it is disappointing to find that chemotherapy, whose impact one might anticipate has yet to be fully realized, is not given greater attention. Indeed, only scant attention is given to the acute leukaemias, where in childhood particularly, extensions to life have been significant.

These criticisms apart, the two volumes afford useful reading to the student entering 'oncology' and will provide a stimulus for further reading.

J. M. A. WHITEHOUSE