Book reviews

Developmental Neuropathology. By R. L. Friede. (Pp. xii + 524; illustrated; \$842; DM122; \$50.10.) Vienna, New York: Springer-Verlag. 1975.

This book is designed to act as a supplement to general textbooks of neuropathology, most of which do not go into very great detail about the pathological changes in the central nervous system of babies and children. It is divided into three main sections: acquired lesions in newborns and infants; malformations; and metabolic diseases; with an addendum on the involvement of the nervous system in haematological diseases. The illustrations are good and plentiful (163 figures), showing mainly macroscopic appearances and those seen by light microscopy. The bibliography is extensive.

The pathology of the infant nervous system is a somewhat neglected subject, largely, one suspects, because of the technical difficulties involved in examining the brain, which is soft and easily damaged during removal. It is little appreciated by general pathologists that damage done at the time of the removal of the brain may well make it virtually impossible to undertake an adequate study of the organ since the brainstem, the region of the hypothalamus, and the spinal cord, not to mention the pituitary, can easily suffer trauma of a degree which renders adequate examination impossible. A further reason for neglect is that the production of good histological preparations is extremely difficult and taxes the best of histological technicians to the uttermost.

It is to be hoped that this book, by showing up the very extensive gaps in our knowledge of the growing brain, will encourage more research in this most difficult of all fields in neuropathology.

The volume, as would be expected from this publisher, is a first-rate example of bookmaking. It is a valuable addition to the literature.

P. M. DANIEL

A Laboratory Guide to Clinical Diagnosis. 4th edition. By R. D. Eastham. (Pp. viii + 303; £2.50.) Bristol: John Wright. 1976.

Dr Eastham describes what happens to virtually anything measurable in various clinical disorders. Whether or not this book will be of use to its possessor depends entirely on the locally available assistance.

How can the book be employed? Either to prescribe a plan of investigation or to explain unforeseen results. However, dealing, for instance, with Addisonian pernicious anaemia on one page, too much is mentioned for diagnosis and too little is mentioned to explain. Evidently Dr Eastham assumes he is guiding a doctor who has sophisticated laboratory services available. In such circumstances the clinician with a diagnostic problem would be well advised to consult with a laboratory-based colleague before embarking upon a panoply of tests as itemized in Dr Eastham's book.

Diagnosis spans a spectrum from the self-evident to the obscure and beyond that, to what is currently unknowable. This book has been published in four editions in 12 years. This must reflect its popularity. Its content is mostly correct. Nonetheless I believe that it perpetuates dogmatic principles in clinical investigation which should be questioned. Measuring everything or measuring nothing is neither clever, economical, nor instructive. Investigation should provide information. Information is what you didn't know before you knew it and what you can use once you have it. I am left wondering whether anyone who needs to use this book should really have direct access to the laboratory services of a hospital.

M. ROSE

Oral Mucosa in Health and Disease. Edited by A. E. Dolby. (Pp. xv + 512; illustrated; £16.00.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1975.

The editor of this book states that it provides a critical presentation of modern scientific knowledge relating to oral mucosa, and that it is intended primarily for graduates with a clinical or biological interest in the oral mucosa. In general, Professor Dolby and his contributors have achieved these objectives very well. The first and longest chapter, entitled *Structure and Function of Normal Human Oral Mucosa*, sets the scene clearly and concisely. The next two chapters deal with basic physiological and immunological considerations, while the remaining eight chapters discuss various aspects of oral mucosal disease. Even those with a specialized knowledge of oral mucosa are likely to find much that is new to them, and the extensive lists of references provide

a valuable key to the literature. In a brief review there is no point in listing small criticisms: this is a valuable and nicely produced book.

I. R. H. KRAMER

Applied Surgical Pathology. Edited by A. E. Stuart, A. N. Smith, and E. Samuel. (Pp. viii + 1112; illustrated; £38.00.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1975.

In the preface the editors point out that this book is written primarily for surgeons and those undergoing surgical training, but also that it seeks to integrate pathology, radiology, and surgery in a systematic account of disease and may be of use to other disciplines. There are 45 authors, almost all from Scotland.

The value of 22 sections to the pathologist in training varies considerably. Those on trauma, the breast, the adrenal gland, the alimentary tract, the central nervous system, and bones and joints are excellent, with valuable emphasis on pathological and radiological co-operation in diagnosis in the last-mentioned chapter.

The bulk of the remaining contributions are good and well illustrated, although a number of photomicrographs of the liver are unsatisfactory. There is a useful brief account of the current problems of lymph-node tumour pathology and a good chapter on the spleen, a difficult subject for the trainee.

A number of chapters are unsatisfactory. The discrepancy between the title of chapter 2 in the list of contents, 'Cancer and the cancer cell' and as it appears in the text 'The cellular basis of malignant disease' perhaps indicates some confusion of purpose, but from the pathological point of view there is not a satisfactory account of either. The chapter on the skin sits uneasily in the book, and certain other chapters, although well written, are of limited value because of the problem of space in a primarily surgical book.

There are some important pathological errors, for example, the polyps of the Peutz-Jeghers syndrome are described as adenomatous, although not in the chapter on the alimentary tract. Errors in production and editing are rare; a caption appears twice in the bone and joint chapter and there is some cross-chapter reiteration, but these are minor faults.

More important in a book of this size is