Handbook of Clinical Pathology. By Joseph A. Sisson. (Pp. x + 524; illustrated; £12.60.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications (for J. E. Lippincott, Philadelphia). 1976.

A prolific transatlantic textbook factory has crammed a lot of information into the few pages of this book, much of it helpful and accurate in its way. Printing errors presumably explain the confusion of some tables—although not, for instance, the description of C3' (sic) as the third component of complement and C4' as the fourth. The units throughout have a fine nostalgia about them, not being SI; it is like learning to read music on the wrong staves with the wrong clefs: the tunes seem the same but the scales are wrong. The equivalent British texts are better set out and, although more leisurely, are more accurate. This book is out of tune with what is required.

R. S. PEREIRA

The Hepatobiliary System. Fundamental and Pathological Mechanisms. Edited by W. Taylor. (Pp. xvii + 654; \$59.40.) New York: Plenum Publishing Corporation. 1976.

This book contains the presented papers, commentaries, and discussion of the second NATO Advanced Studies Institute on 'The Biliary System', held in Denmark in August 1975. The book is divided into sections: (1) Membranes and transport mechanisms—gives an excellent up-date on biological membrane structure; (2) Structure and function in the hepatobiliary system—much of interest to the morphologist here; (3) Bilirubin conjugates—a short section, but a good review of current thought in this field; (4) Two sections on bile acids and lipids—the explosive and rapid development in these topics is fully covered, and even 'cholangiophobes' may easily and painlessly familiarise themselves with the present situation; and (5) A section on cholestasis—giving a classification of the aetiology and a quite splendid review of the molecular pathology of this the most enigmatic aspect of liver disease.

Dr Taylor, the editor, in his own contribution in the book avers that a two-volume book on bile acids published in 1972 is now somewhat out of date. In the light of this the editor and publishers are to be congratulated on producing such a splendid volume so soon after the conference. The text contains few typographical

errors, and the minor irritations caused by the lack of editing and lack of references in the discussion are far outweighed by the advantages of its speedy publication. The book is warmly recommended to all practising hepatologists.

R. N. M. MACSWEEN

Systemic Pathology, 2nd edition. Volume I. Cardiovascular System. Respiratory System. By 38 authors. Edited by W. St. C. Symmers. (Pp. xii + 428; illustrated; £19.50.) Edinburgh, London and New York: Churchill Livingstone. 1976.

The first edition of *Systemic Pathology*, the foundation of the College of Pathologists, the organised training of specialised pathologists, and the expansion of diagnostic histopathology throughout this country all came at much the same time and have become dependent upon each other. The continued advances in the knowledge of histopathology that have been brought about by the clinicopathological investigation of living patients (rather than dead patients or laboratory animals) have meant that a second edition within 10 years serves a real need. This first volume, with three more to follow, is devoted to the pathology of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems and, although there are other recent specialised works on both these subjects, there is every indication that the new material, up-dating, re-editing, and re-indexing the second edition, will maintain *Systemic Pathology* as the standard work for histopathologists in training—and that means all of us—and for pathologists at the bench. For those who will read every word, it is clear and readable; those who use it as a reference book can find succinct information quickly. The two familiar, well-used maroon volumes of the previous edition will become replaced by the new black books, and to these we shall often turn first; usually we shall not have to seek further. Only one doubt crosses this reader's mind—will there be a cumulative index of all four volumes? It will surely be needed.

Judging from the first of the four volumes that has been published—a substantial biopsy of a very important specimen—there can be no doubt that this new edition of *Systemic Pathology* has confirmed that the domination of the major texts in pathology by the Germans and Americans has ended. Clinical pathologists will watch with pleasure the international success of this practical, yet

scholarly, product of British histopathology.

R. A. B. DRURY

Current Topics in Immunology Series. Allergic Drug Reactions. By Harry E. Amos. (Pp. vi + 136; illustrated; £4.95.) London: Edward Arnold. 1976.

This is a useful little book which describes the subject of adverse drug reactions in a clear and readable fashion. The author covers the basic mechanisms underlying such reactions and goes on to describe how drugs can become antigenic. Finally, he describes and discusses the way in which suspected drug allergy is investigated both *in vivo* and *in vitro*. There is no attempt to underplay the limitations of these techniques. I was a little worried about the introductory paragraph in Chapter 5 on Antigenic Determinants of the Penicillin Molecule which without qualification extols the lack of toxicity of penicillin without mentioning the dangers of high-dose penicillin administration intrathecally.

In conclusion, I recommend this book to anyone who prescribes drugs and is asked to investigate the adverse effects which are caused by drug therapy.

I. C. M. MACLENNAN

Notice

International Symposium on Gut Hormones

To mark the 75th anniversary of the discovery of the first 'hormone' by Bayliss and Starling, an international symposium sponsored by the Widmer Foundation will be held in Lausanne, Switzerland on 18-19 June 1977. The whole field of gastrointestinal hormones will be reviewed.

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