Book reviews

recommended both to researchers and to those engaged in the routine analysis of CSF.

A. I. SPRIGGS

Light Microscopic Techniques in Biology and Medicine. By J. James. (Pp. xi + 336; illustrated; Dfl. 90; £21.60.) The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff B.V. 1976.

This book sets out to give enough background optics for a rational approach to all the common microscopic techniques as well as the basic principles of less common ones and on the whole it succeeds admirably. The author does not claim to have written a comprehensive treatise but has given a good guide for further reading at the end of each chapter. There are excellent line drawings which render the basic optics intelligible with minimal mathematical expertise. Surprisingly, one or two of the photomicrographs are disappointing. This is also a very practical work and even includes a section on posture which will be welcomed by sufferers of cervical spondylosis.

On the whole the English is clear and very readable though occasionally it has a slightly stilted Germanic flavour. There are a few typographical errors of minor importance though the one on p. 195, fourth line from the bottom where 'anisotropic' should read 'isotropic' is more serious. These small criticisms do not, however, detract from the value of this well-printed and well-presented book. I fear, however, that few will be able to afford to add it to their personal collection. Nevertheless it would be a valuable addition to the laboratory library for the profit of technician and pathologist, both of whom are regrettably often woefully ignorant of the workings of this basic laboratory tool.

J. C. VALENTINE

Hepatocellular Carcinoma. Edited by K. Okuda and R. L. Peters. (Pp. x + 499; illustrated; £27.00.) Chichester: John Wiley. 1976.

Although relatively uncommon in the western world, hepatocellular carcinoma has attracted much attention for a number of reasons. These included the association with and the possible aetiological role of aflatoxin food contamination, oral contraception, hepatitis B infection, and genetic factors; the significance of hepatocyte dysplasia as a pre-neoplastic lesion; the inappropriate secretion of humoral

substances and alpha feto-protein and their value in diagnosis; the development of isotope scanning and angiography in localization; and the recent attempts at radical cure by surgical resection and chemotherapy. These are among the many topics dealt with in detail in this book. For the clinical pathologist it would be difficult to imagine a more complete and lavishly illustrated account not only of primary liver cancer, but of all other human hepatic tumours and tumour-like lesions, both benign and malignant.

Each of the 21 chapters stands as a review article by one or two acknowledged experts. While this has led to some unevenness in overall presentation and in relevance for the general reader there is little by way of overlap or conflicting statements, and the book can be recommended with confidence to all clinicians and pathologists concerned with human liver disease. It appears that this is the first of a series on diseases of the liver from this publishing house, and one looks forward with interest to subsequent volumes.

R. S. PATRICK

The Cervix. Edited by J. A. Jordan and Albert Singer. (Pp. xviii + 529; illustrated; £20.00.) London: W. B. Saunders. 1976.

This book comprises 43 chapters by as many different contributors. The sheer size of the book bears testimony to the extent of the participation of the human cervix in the advance of biological knowledge which has occurred in the last two decades.

A comprehensive coverage of most physiological and pathological conditions affecting the cervix is presented, and considerable attention is paid to new fields of research. In the main, the discussion is critical and well balanced, and most of the numerous illustrations are of a high quality. The description and correlation of colposcopic and histopathological patterns in cervical epithelial dysplasia together with transmission and scanning electron microscopy of normal and abnormal epithelium is most welcome. The uterine cervix is presented, quite correctly, as a dynamic structure rather than one merely fulfilling a passive role in reproduction.

This book is a reference work which is largely directed towards specialists in the field of reproductive and gynaecological disorders. The content is instructive and

valuable and should appeal to both clinician and scientist alike.

J. O. W. BEILBY

Developmental Biology and Pathology. Current Topics in Pathology. Vol. 62. Edited by A. Gropp and K. Benirschke. (Pp. ix + 218; illustrated; \$39.40.) Berlin: Heidelberg: New York: Springer-Verlag. 1976.

This book is part of a long running series in which various topics are reviewed by workers active in their particular fields of study. It has always maintained a high scientific standard, and the present volume is no exception. After a brief introduction by Austin on errors of very early development, 12 topics are dealt with under the four general headings of Oocyte Maturation, Early Embryo and Maternal Host, Pharmacological and Hormonal Factors in Early Embryogenesis, Teratology, and Cytogenetics. Much of the information will be useful to paediatric or gynaecological pathologists, particularly those who wish to acquire some knowledge of the background against which many of the disease processes that concern them are expressed. Illustrations and diagrams are of high quality throughout, and references are up to date. Although the symposium on which this book was based was held in 1974, many 1975 and 1976 references are included.

C. L. BERRY

The Neutrophil. By Patrick Murphy. (Pp. xii + 217; illustrated; \$21.54.) Plenum, New York and London: Plenum Medical Book Company. 1976.

Although the neutrophil is not so fashionable a cell as the lymphocyte, there are quite a lot of people working with neutrophils nowadays. It is possible to hold international conferences on topics such as chemotaxis or bactericidal mechanisms and to fill a room with experts who disagree about quite a lot of things. Consequently, to write a monograph entitled *The Neutrophil* is not a light undertaking. Dr Murphy, in setting out on this task, decided, I think rightly, not to attempt to be encyclopaedic but to hinge his discussion around selected pertinent papers. He begins at the beginning by telling us what the cells look like. He has covered most of the fields of neutrophil physiology that anyone likely to be interested in neutrophils would wish to see dealt with, even fields about which nothing is really known, such as control of

marrow production of neutrophils and their fate. The book does not, however, deal to any extent with neutrophil pathology. In his inevitably brief treatment of better ploughed fields, such as, again, chemotaxis and killing, I think he has struck about the right balance. The book also has the merit, in an age when papers become obsolete in about 18 months, of keeping an historical perspective and showing us that our predecessors were quite intelligent and capable of doing useful experiments. The discussion is firmly based in the pathology of inflammation. For me the book was too brief on most topics, but beginners in neutrophil work may find this a virtue and use the book as a starting-point to explore their own areas of interest. Dr Murphy has a somewhat dogmatic style and often refers to hypotheses as being 'completely disproved' and ideas as 'finally disposed of' by workers who perhaps may not themselves have wished to make their case in quite such emphatic terms. Despite this, I shall certainly lend my copy of Dr Murphy's book to people beginning in the laboratory as a useful introduction to the neutrophil. There were lots of things I learnt from it myself and intend to follow up by looking up some of the useful references listed by chapter at the back of the book.

P. C. WILKINSON

Clinical Chemistry in Diagnosis and Treatment. 2nd edition. By Joan F. Zilva and J. R. Pannall. (Pp. xxi + 498; illustrated; £3.00.) London: Lloyd-Luke. 1975.

Revision of this book has inevitably led to an increase in length, largely on account of new concepts and applications in clinical chemistry, particularly those relevant to endocrinology. This second edition provides an excellent text for undergraduates, for whom it is primarily written. The style of the text makes the book easy reading for those undertaking revision for the primary examinations of the Royal Colleges, and, coupled with the very carefully selected suggestions for further reading given at the end of each chapter, this should provide a valuable base for study leading to the MCB or final MRC Path examinations.

One excellent feature of the book which makes each chapter easy to read, but also makes the text a useful reference source, is the relegation of details of special investigations to an appendix at the end

of each chapter. Another excellent feature is the inclusion of chapters on sources of error in chemical tests and the indications for requesting investigations (or, rather, the contraindications for excessive investigation). What a pity these are the last chapters and therefore less likely to be read. In fact, the importance of their contents is such that they could well act as the introduction to the book and change places with the brief, but useful, information relating to units of measurement and conversion tables which could be placed at the end of the book.

While the purist may well find fault with an individual chapter, the authors are to be congratulated on producing a second edition which will undoubtedly be held in the same high esteem as its predecessor.

C. A. PENNOCK

Drug Metabolism: Chemical and Biochemical Aspects. Drugs and the Pharmaceutical Sciences. Volume 4. By Bernard Testa and Peter Jenner. (Pp. xiii + 500; illustrated; Sw Fr. 160.00.) New York and Basel: Marcel Dekker. 1976.

The book is part of the series 'Drugs and the Pharmaceutical Sciences'. The authors have approached their subject with a well-defined plan. They have started by classifying the chemical reactions in which drugs can take part by virtue of functional groups and structural elements. This, together with a presentation of metabolic schemes of selected drugs and the stereochemical aspects of drug metabolism, occupies about half of the book. In this section the chemistry of phase I reactions, which involve the transformation of specific groups and the creation of new functional groups, and phase II reactions, which are involved in the conjugation of drugs, are clearly described for a large number of drugs. The reader will readily find for many drugs the fundamental information which is often required but not easily accessible. The second half of the book is concerned with the way in which animals (mammals) handle drugs at the cellular level, both intrahepatic and extrahepatic. The enzyme systems involved in phase I and phase II reactions are comprehensively covered as are the induction and inhibition of drug-metabolising enzyme systems. Observed differences dependent on species, sex, and age are referred to, and there is a short section on placental drug metabolism.

The style and presentation of the book are admirable. Within its limited compass

the work is encyclopaedic, each topic being discussed in the form of a short article with its own references. The articles, of course, follow the logic of the book but, because of the absence of an overall narrative form, it is easy to find the information which one requires about a particular aspect of the subject. However, as with all good encyclopaedias, it is very easy to be led down some fascinating trail away from one's original enquiry.

The reviewer would have liked some what more space to be devoted to the physiochemical handling of drugs in the body but, given the frightening price of nearly £40 for a book which is 500 pages long, perhaps one should not stress this. It is difficult to see how an individual could purchase this fine book. One only hopes in these days of austerity that not too many librarians will be deterred.

M. G. RINSLER

Notice

Conference on clinical perspectives of CEA
A Conference on Clinical Perspectives of Carcinoembryonic Antigen (CEA) will be held 1 to 3 June 1977 at the University of Kentucky Medical Center, Lexington, Kentucky. Its purpose is to assess the current clinical uses of CEA assays in the management of cancer patients and to discuss various new approaches for measuring and detecting CEA in body fluids and tissues. Emphasis will be placed on determining the value and problems of CEA tests in various clinical practices. Part of the conference will be devoted to the basic questions of the immunology and chemistry of CEA, immunocytochemistry of CEA in the pathology laboratory, and a discussion of other new markers identified in tumours which may prove of value for cancer immunodiagnosis.

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