

afforded ovarian tumours elsewhere in the book. Moreover, this has to some extent introduced terminological confusion, particularly in the germ cell section.

Overall the book is beautifully produced with great attention to detail and numerous references. It is obviously a work that will be in demand by those with a special interest in gynaecological pathology and is recommended as a valuable reference book for the shelves of any medical library. J. O. W. BEILBY

**Radiotracer Techniques and Applications.** Volume 2. Edited by E. A. Evans and M. Muramatsu. (Pp. xiii + 544; illustrated; SFr. 160) New York and Basel: Marcel Decker. 1977.

This book forms the second volume of a two-part work designed to provide a comprehensive basic understanding of radiotracer techniques and their applications in chemical, biomedical, and environmental sciences.

In this volume seven of the nine chapters are of direct interest to workers in laboratory and clinical medicine. The topics discussed include the use of radiotracers in biosynthetic studies, drug metabolism, cytology, enzymology, 'radioimmunoassay', clinical diagnosis, and cancer treatment.

As in the first volume, all the authors are recognised authorities in their subjects, and in most cases the literature has been reviewed up to 1977. In addition to discussing basic principles and the applications of radiotracers in their own fields the authors discuss the problems and pitfalls that may be encountered. The depth of the coverage of the subject varies from chapter to chapter, and in one or two cases the treatment is somewhat superficial.

In general, this book provides a valuable up-to-date survey of radionuclide tracer techniques. Because of its very wide coverage the book will be of more use to the reader with a general interest than to the expert, or aspirant expert, in specific fields. The book is very highly priced for a volume set in typescript rather than in letter press, and this, unfortunately, will mean that few readers will feel able to purchase a copy for their personal bookshelves. D. M. TAYLOR

**Comparative Clinical Haematology.** Edited by R. K. Archer and L. B. Jeffcott. (Pp.

xi + 737; illustrated; £25.00) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1977.

*Comparative Clinical Haematology* is a large text which presents authoritative and up-to-date accounts by 14 authors on various aspects of human and veterinary haematology. This well-presented text with excellent tables, permitting easy assimilation, succeeds to a considerable extent in its attempt to encompass such a very large field. The book is well worth possessing by those with interests in the comparative aspects of this subject. Naturally, there are considerable differences among the authors in their emphases and approaches in presenting the large body of available information on species as diverse as man, mouse, horse, and marmoset, to name merely some of those considered. A more consistent scheme of presentation in the chapters dealing with individual species (or groups of species) would have achieved more because there would have been a more decisive indication of where similarities and dissimilarities exist among species. Furthermore, such an approach would also have drawn attention more emphatically to the many gaps in our knowledge of the haematology of healthy and diseased domestic animals at any rate. For example, regulation of iron in all its aspects is discussed only in the chapter devoted to human haematology. While undoubtedly similar in principle in other species, much more detail needs to be known of iron modulation in the species, especially as iron may be involved to an important extent in infectious episodes and in immunological responses. There is also considerable unevenness among the various authors in their treatment of abnormalities of the blood and of those pathological conditions in which such changes are a major clinical feature. The approach here is very selective in what is, after all, a text on clinical haematology. E. COTCHIN

**Antibiotics and Chemotherapy.** Series editors: H. Schönfeld, R. W. Brockman, and F. E. Hahn. Volume 22. **Laboratory Testing for Cancer.** Edited by H. Schönfeld (Pp. vi + 189; illustrated; SFr/DM 76, \$34.00) International Conference on Laboratory Testing for Cancer, February 1977, Brussels. Basel, Munich, Paris, London, New York, Sydney: S. Karger. 1978.

Specific tests for cancer have stalked the

frontiers of credibility since the beginning of this century, and the recent renaissance of this subject stems from a similar resurgence of interest in tumour immunology. Clearly, if such tests existed they could make an enormous impact on clinical cancer management. Indeed, such tumour markers as CEA and AFP already play a role, albeit a minor one, in some clinical contexts, and much is expected from current research. This book brings together 19 papers from assorted contributors in an attempt to examine such expectations. Lacking a sense of history, the book never mentions those ghosts of former times now laid to rest: such spectres as the von Dungern test, the Freund-Kaminer test, or the Pfeiffer reaction. Their inclusion could have provided some perspective against which to examine the claims for contemporary tests.

Editorial influence is minimal. Many contributors cover similar ground, and the style is uneven. Several chapters demand an intimate knowledge of the topic whereas, for example, Dr Rees's lucid short paper on hormone production, written for laymen, carefully defines acromegaly, Cushing's syndrome, and even cerebrospinal fluid in a style that would grace the pages of *Reader's Digest*. Schwartz has provided the best chapter: a rational analysis of progress so far. He is not seduced by preliminary data and, unlike several other contributors, eschews over-optimistic speculation.

Professor Bagshawe argues in defence of the somewhat vulnerable MET and SCM tests that we do not have to understand a test as long as it works. Fair enough. However, proof that a test works (or does not) is a very complex game. The design of adequately controlled prospective studies becomes the most important aspect of evaluating a test, a problem which receives little attention anywhere in the book. Are the results of tests to be compared to histological diagnosis? If so, how many false-positives does histology provide?

The symposium was sponsored by a company interested in selling cancer tests, and economic considerations loom rather large. Clinical pathology is referred to as an industry: cancer patients are the market. The economic imperative, with its emphasis on marketing, allows little concern for critical scientific scrutiny, and little is shown. The few excellent papers in this uneven compilation are not enough to redeem it.

G. A. CURRIE