of the spinal cord, and pathologists in training.

D. I. GRAHAM

Surgical Pathology of the Uterus. By S. G. Silverberg. (Pp. xi + 130; illustrated; £10.50.) New York: John Wiley and Sons. 1977.

This book describes how a pathologist should approach uterine specimens, the histological appearances he will encounter, and how he should summarise his findings as a guide for the clinician. The introductory chapter stresses that the most important single principle of surgical pathology is respect for the specimen, which 'mirrors the respect of the pathologist for both the clinician and the patient, without which the pathologist can hardly be said to be engaged in the practice of medicine'. Subsequent chapters discuss endometrial biopsy for infertility, curettage for abnormal vaginal bleeding, hysterectomy for benign and malignant disease, cervical biopsy especially in the context of the follow-up of abnormal cytology, the diagnosis of pregnancy and trophoblastic disease, and cervical and vaginal specimens from DES-exposed females.

The author, who has considerable experience in this field, has produced a lucid text with well argued opinions. Thus he prefers to report on endometrial biopsies in terms of the phase of the cycle rather than the presumptive date. In endometrial hyperplasia he stresses the importance of providing the clinician with a clear understanding of the severity and extent of the lesion, without which the uterus is too often removed. Silverberg is well known for his lack of enthusiasm for mitosis counting when assessing the malignancy of uterine tumours. 'It is obvious', he says 'that tumours carry neither micrometers nor calculators'.

Applications of the principles described in this book would not only improve the practice of gynaecological pathology but, more importantly, of gynaecology itself.

F. A. LANGLEY

Principles of Surgical Oncology. Edited by R. W. Raven. (Pp. x + 509; illustrated; \$45.00.) New York and London: Plenum Press. 1977.

With the recent increasing interest in oncology, the establishment of new training programmes, and numerous discussions for including surgical oncology, there is a need to have relevant up-to-date texts for the established and in-training oncologist. The present book attempts to provide a scientific basis for surgical oncology. The chapters are protean, ranging from aspects of fundamental science, through cancer aetiology and epidemiology, and laboratory medicine to practical management of the tumour-bearing patient.

This book, unfortunately, is disappointing, failing to achieve its aims. There is a lack of detail in some sections, over-emphasis on others, and regrettably too much unsound data for a text of this size. The difficulty of providing a useful, scientific text on oncology as a whole is regrettably illustrated by this book.

A. MUNRO NEVILLE

Blood Smears Reinterpreted. By Marcel Bessis. (Translated from the French by G. Brecher.) (Pp. xvi + 270; 342 figures—some in colour; cloth DM 96; \$42.30.) Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer-Verlag. 1977.

This book by Marcel Bessis has been translated from the French original by George Brecher and, according to the Preface, it was hotly debated and somewhat amended in the process. The end result, however, is an attractively presented and eminently readable monograph on the cell biology of blood and marrow.

Bessis explains in detail how the morphological appearances in stained films arise, and he has also included illustrations of phase contrast and scanning electron microscopy as well as diagrams of transmission electron micrographs. The chapter on plasma cells best illustrates how he relates structure to function; most haematologists know, for example, why the cytoplasm of a plasma cell stains dark blue but how many could explain exactly why the nucleus is eccentric or why the cytoplasm occasionally flames?

The author warns us that his book is not comprehensive yet it really is rather

complete given that all the descriptions and illustrations occupy a total of only 238 pages. There are chapters on the erythrocytic, granulocytic, lymphocytic, plasmocytic, monohistiocytic, mastocytic, and thrombocytic series as well as on pathological red cells and the leukaemias. The final chapter describes techniques for both light and electron microscopy.

I found very few things to criticise. The chapter on the general anatomy and physiology of blood cells was rather divorced from the remainder of the book and contained a number of errors, such as the statement that the cell membrane is 800 nm thick. The cost of the book also seemed rather high at £25.92 but this criticism can be levelled to some extent at almost any other publication. I hope that every haematology department can afford to buy a copy.

J. M. ENGLAND

Crohn's Disease. By B. N. Brooke, D. A. Cave, J. F. Curry, and D. W. King. (Pp. x + 113; illustrated; £9.75.) London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Limited. 1977.

This is a short and enjoyable book which, although of no practical value to diagnostic pathologists, provides excellent background knowledge and is a good source of references. One-third of the book covers aetiology, epidemiology, and genetics, pooling together widely scattered knowledge. Many interesting theories are put forward, for example, that Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are caused by similar agents, but the divergent morphology results from different immunological handling as one ascends the vertebrate animal kingdom. The chapter on diagnosis is a helpful résumé of the key features of the diseases in the differential, and a chapter on the acute complications of Crohn's disease emphasises two important points: firstly, the occurrence of 'acute disintegrative colitis' (toxic megacolon) and, secondly, 'acute terminal ileitis', only 10-12% of which persist as Crohn's disease.

This book is not intended for those who only look down a microscope; it is an enjoyable way to appreciate the current knowledge on Crohn's disease.

A. B. PRICE