Bochum and claims to have 'no precedent on the market'. Certainly, it would be difficult to name another single current volume, of manageable size, that attempts to deal with the complement system and its relevance to disease. The book is aimed, so say the publishers, at 'hospital physicians and clinical pathologists', and, as is so often the case with symposium proceedings, it will satisfy neither fully. The clinician will be deterred by the first two sections on methods and method standardisation—largely because many clinicians are either bored or bemused by graphs of haemolytic assays and blurred photographs of immunoelectrophoresis. If they take the self-indulgent step of omitting the first 60 pages, they will then come face-to-face with five succeeding sections which deal with the complement components in a wide selection of disease states. Diagnosis and prognosis using complement assays are dealt with in relation to the haematopoietic system, the respiratory system (newborn respiratory distress syndrome), CMV infections, the autoimmune disorders, liver disease, and neurological disorders. The quality of papers is very variable: there are some thoughtful reviews of the current state of ignorance, for example, by Petz, who discusses the problems of choosing Coombs' reagent, and by Snyderman and McCartney, who give a systematised account of the usefulness (or otherwise) of complement assays, particularly in relation to SLE.

The book also includes a series of six papers, grouped as 'Pathophysiology', which deal largely with experimental data on the function of complement *in vitro*, with some extrapolations to its *in-vivo* behaviour. There are four papers dealing with complement and activation by drugs, which include three interesting studies on the effects of radiographic contrast media; these help to explain some of the rather frightening adverse reactions that have been encountered since the introduction of the soluble derivatives of triiodobenzoic acid (for example, methylglucamine diatrizoate). The adverse effect of these compounds when given in relatively high dosage is mainly produced through the alternate pathway, either by direct activation or by activation of proteolytic enzymes which, in turn, cleave complement proteins. Antibody is not involved, and there may well be associated activity within the coagulation cascade and fibrinolytic systems.

The genetic aspects of the complement

system are dealt with in the final series of presented papers. Despite the relative rarity of genetically determined deficiencies of complement components, these are proving a fruitful source of material for the study of the biological role of complement proteins in the intact animal, rather as the inborn errors of metabolism helped to clarify the enzymatic pathways for the biochemists. The clinicians may be happy to see the 'complementologists' weaned away from their obsessive preoccupation with sheep red cells, and will eventually gain insight into some hitherto unexplained disorders of defective bacterial handling and auto-immune disorders.

Like many collections of symposium proceedings, this book resembles the legendary 'curate's egg'—it's very good in parts. But, unlike the unhappy curate, anxious to please his host, the bishop, I would perhaps point out—it's bad in parts. To attract the clinical reader, one would have to remove the detailed technical papers; to interest the laboratory worker one needs rather more than a few enthusiastic exponents of C_3 assays to expound the merits and demerits of the assay systems. However, it is encouraging to see an attempted marriage of clinician and laboratory worker, particularly over the anvil of complement, which has for so long been a puzzle to the one and an esoteric discipline to the other. Some of the discussion sections are perhaps the most enlightening parts of the book because they often reveal the great gaps that still exist, both in understanding how complement works and its relationship to normal and disease states. With all its defects, this book marks an interesting stage in the natural history of complement and human tissues, and it should attract the immunologist practising in the medical environment—even if only for future comparison with what may be published in 10 years' time.

HEATHER M. DICK

Clinics in Endocrinology and Metabolism. Volume 8, No. 1. 'Hypothyroidism and Goitre'. Edited by D. Evered and R. Hall. (Pp. vii + 245; illustrated; Single issue price £8.25.) London, Philadelphia, Toronto: W. B. Saunders. 1979.

The introduction of immunological tests for thyroid autoantibodies and of radio-immunoassays for the measurement of the hormones of the pituitary thyroid system has resulted in a resurgence of interest in diseases of the thyroid. The

two editors of this volume, who have themselves contributed greatly to the new knowledge, have enlisted a distinguished group of authors to assist them in producing a companion to an earlier volume in this series which was devoted to hyperthyroidism.

This is a rich collection of reviews with something of interest to everyone. There are chapters on congenital hypothyroidism, endemic goitre and cretinism, and dysor-monogenetic goitre; there are others on the aetiology, epidemiology, immunology, and investigation of hypothyroidism; and still more on goitrogens, non-toxic goitre, thyroid nodules, tumours, and cancer. Each chapter is clearly and concisely written and contains a multitude of references, including many from 1978. This compact book is highly recommended.

R. L. HIMSWORTH

Handbook of Clinical Neurology. Series Editors: P. J. Vinken and G. W. Bruyn. Volume 35. 'Infections of the Nervous System'. Part III. Edited by P. J. Vinken and G. W. Bruyn in collaboration with H. L. Klawans. (Pp. xii + 584; illustrated; US\$10.675, Dfl. 240.00.) Amsterdam, New York, Oxford: North-Holland Publishing Company. 1978.

This is the last of three volumes concerned with infections of the nervous system in a series of 36 volumes on clinical neurology. This volume has 27 chapters written by 34 authors drawn almost equally from North America, South America, and Europe, although one is South African.

There are chapters on infections by protozoa, helminths, and mycotic agents, and these cover actinomycosis, amoebic infections, angiostrongylus cantonensis, ascariasis, aspergillosis, candidosis, coccidioidomycosis, cryptococcosis, cysticercosis, echinococcosis, filariasis, helminthiasis, histoplasmosis, malaria, a review of mycosis, North American blastomycosis, nocardiosis, paracoccidioidomycosis, paragonimiasis, phycomycosis (mucormycosis), schistosomiasis, toxoplasmosis, trichinosis, and trypanosomiasis. A final chapter refers to a series of rather uncommon fungal diseases and includes references often to single case reports of *allescheria boydii*, *alternariasis*, *cephalosporiosis*, *cladosporiosis*, *diplorhinotrichosis*, *drechsleri* *Fonsecae* *madurelliosis*, *paecilomycosis*, *penicilliosis*, *sporotrichosis*, *streptomycosis*, *torulopsias*,

trichophytosis, and ustilagomycosis. To this reviewer, whose professional experience has been gained mostly in the UK, most of these conditions are merely names, and hence the introductory chapter giving an overall view of these infections, which are frequently, but not always, of tropical origin, is useful.

As was the case with volume 34, this volume is almost a textbook of general medicine with a neurological slant, but as with vol. 34, this is a necessary situation as these conditions are not always primary infections of the CNS. There is a constant reminder that a number of infections are opportunistic and occur in persons who are either on long-term steroids or immunosuppressed for one reason or another. Nor can pathologists who work outside the tropical belt ignore the conditions being discussed in this volume, because there is always a chance that such conditions may be encountered in their own hospitals as a result of increasing travel on business as well as pleasure, and the desire for more and more people to explore the rural areas in the tropics.

In contrast with volume 34, the biological properties and characteristics of the infective agents are not laboured as much on this occasion, the authors obviously realising that clinicians are the primary readers of this series. Clinical presentations, methods of diagnosis, and recommendations for treatment are covered adequately, and each chapter has a general list of up-to-date references. It has been more difficult to avoid an overlap of coverage in this volume than in the previous two. Cysticercosis, echinococcosis, and paragonimiasis are each given good cover in at least two different chapters. The colour illustrations are few but of high quality. Most of the black-and-white illustrations are of similar high quality, but I fear that a few of the histological illustrations could be misread by non-histologists because they lack arrows and data about the staining methods and magnification. One or two low-power illustrations might have been better omitted. Rather surprisingly, one or two chapters have no illustrations, even of the infective agent that is under discussion. Indeed, the reviewer's ignorance is so gross that he would have welcomed illustrations about the (exotic) infective agents discussed in the last chapter, to broaden his education. I hasten to add that the descriptions in the text are adequate most of the time, and one can always refer to the original publications, but I was

disappointed that most of these uncommon infections, hitherto unknown to me, were not illustrated.

With the increasing usage of powerful antimicrobial agents in the treatment of various malignant processes, it is interesting to speculate how common some of these infections might become. This is a well-produced book with a wealth of information and is as highly regarded as the other two parts (vols 33 and 34), which constitute a trio covering bacterial, viral, protozoan, helminth, and mycotic infections of the central nervous system.

J. F. BOYD

Color Atlas and Textbook of Human Anatomy. In 3 volumes. Volume 1. Locomotor System. By W. Kahle, H. Leonhardt, and W. Platzer. (Pp. x + 430; illustrated; £8.25.) Chicago and London: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1978.

The editors describe this volume as a pocket atlas, stressing that it is neither a full anatomy textbook nor for use as a dissection manual. The text is concise and systematic with clear headings but is not full enough to be reliable as a student's sole textbook. The diagrams include a sufficient variety of aspects to infer the three-dimensional structures, and there is a good, but not excessive, use of colour for clarity. It contains only limited reference to clinical applications and to developmental anatomy. The index and list of contents are adequate for the most part and aid quick reference, but there are some omissions.

This is not a suitable first book for a student but may be of use as a revision reference book. The price for this single volume, £8.25, is rather high.

J. T. M. KAY

Clinical Chemistry Companion. By A. M. Bold and P. Wilding. (Pp. 119; £3.75.) Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Melbourne: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1978.

The laudable aim of this book is to provide basic information to assist doctors, students, and nurses in the efficient use of the clinical chemistry laboratory. The first portion consists of an updated version of their previous publication *Clinical Chemistry: conversion scales for SI units with Adult Normal Reference Values*. The remainder covers storage and stability of specimens together with some aspects of sideroom methods and special test procedures.

Repeatedly (and correctly) throughout the book the reader is advised to check local reference ranges, methods, required preservatives, and procedures. While this book may have value in relation to the author's laboratories it contains many discrepancies on matters of practice with other laboratories which will require local amendment and this restricts its more general utility. Most clinical chemistry departments will have a similar list or aide-memoire for issue to their own staff, and such locally orientated information is likely to be more helpful. At £3.75 this book is expensive, and its paperback format will not last long in a white coat pocket.

B. M. SLAVIN

Clinical Aspects of Neuroimmunology. By Edward A. Neuwelt and W. Kemp Clark. (Pp. xiv + 277; illustrated; \$38.50.) Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins. 1978.

There are a number of surprises in this book. Firstly, it is written by two neurosurgeons, a species of doctor who is usually too busy to write on his own field never mind on another. Secondly, the book is misnamed; it deals with immunological aspects of neurological diseases and not *vice versa* as the title implies.

With these provisos, Neuwelt and Kemp Clark have written an excellent book that provides a solid foundation of immunology for the neuroscientist. It reveals a profound understanding of the subject by the authors who are actively engaged in tumour immunology—an outstanding chapter. However, the rest of the book is lucid with first-class summaries, tables, and diagrams. The book is lavishly illustrated with histological sections, radiographs, and CAT scans, all of the highest quality.

The first chapter is a comprehensive review of general immunology, and the second describes the methods used in neuroimmunology. Then follows a review of special aspects that apply to the central nervous system, specifically that the brain is a 'privileged site', and the light that immunological observations throw on CSF production. Finally, there are chapters on the role of immunological complexes in neurological disease, the immunology of myasthenia gravis, CNS infections, and demyelinating diseases central and peripheral.

The literature from both sides of the Atlantic is well encompassed, and there