Book reviews

Diagnostic Methods in Viral Hepatitis. Edited by P. S. Gardner and Colin R. Howard. (Pp. xi + 92; illustrated; \$12.) New York: Alan R. Liss, Inc. Also available through European Book Service at 36.00 Dutch Guilders.

This book contains the papers presented at a symposium organised in London in January 1978 by the European Group for Rapid Virus Diagnosis. The quality of the contributions is very mixed. The papers on rapid HBsAg detection, e-antigen detection and its implications, and DNA polymerase assay provide useful practical information. Several papers are merely two-page summaries and contain too little information to be worthy of inclusion. The publicity literature associated with this book is more misleading than usual. No techniques for the detection of hepatitis A antigen or antibody are described nor is immunofluorescence discussed. This book will be of interest to laboratories with a special interest in hepatitis B diagnosis but is not sufficiently broad in scope to be attractive to a wider audience. All the papers have also been published in the *Journal of Medical Virology*, Volume 3, Number 1, 1978.

E. A. C. FOLLETT

Electron Microscopy in Human Medicine. Volume 2. Cellular Pathobiology. Metabolic and Storage Diseases. Edited by J. V. Johannessen. (Pp. xv + 256; illustrated; £18.15.) New York: McGraw Hill International Book Co. (UK) Ltd. 1978.

This is the second of a proposed 11-volume series which deals with the impact of electron microscopy on our understanding of human disease. Unlike the first volume, which dealt with basic techniques at a fairly simple level, Volume 2 is a handbook for the specialist. In the first part, Professor Heinz David undertakes to describe and categorise, at the ultrastructural level, the basic processes of cellular disease. The result is a highly condensed reference source, inevitably somewhat telegraphic in places, which will perhaps be more widely appreciated by the academic research worker and the honours student than by the routine diagnostic pathologist. It represents a scholarly analysis of a large and unwieldy body of ultrastructural knowledge. In the

second part of this book, Professor Pierre Dustin's group outlines the contribution of electron microscopy to the understanding of the metabolic and storage diseases. This is a beautifully illustrated and detailed study, which the service pathologist involved in the field of electron microscopy will find to be of particular value as a reference source in the work-up of these rare but fascinating conditions. Here again, as in the first section, over 350 references are provided.

The quality of the paper, printing, and production of this book are outstanding. It is a pleasure to handle. Although authors and editor alike are not native English speakers, the quality of the text is uniformly high, with only occasional defects in idiom or expression. In recent years one has become almost immune to book prices: in this case, at £18.15, this opulent production is certainly value for money. There is no doubt that this book will find a place in every serious laboratory where human disease is investigated by electron microscopy. The subsequent volumes of the series will be awaited with interest.

P. G. TONER

Diagnostic Electron Microscopy. Edited by Benjamin F. Trump and Raymond T. Jones. (Pp. xiii + 401; illustrated; £24.00.) Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. 1979.

This second volume in a continuing series begins with a concise summary of the organisation, goals, and experience of the diagnostic electron microscopy service set up by the Veterans Administration of the USA. Their aim, a model of foresight and planning, has been to establish, throughout the USA, diagnostic EM units largely devoted to service pathology and related clinical research. The system is designed to permit the ultrastructural study of some 4% of the total throughput of surgical material. The active encouragement abroad of this field of diagnostic histopathology contrasts sadly with current attitudes in Britain, where there is but scant recognition of the growing need for investment in ultrastructural facilities and training programmes for general service-related work.

The other chapters in this book include reviews of liver pathology, the haemopoietic system, ophthalmic and neuropathology, the urinary bladder, and gynaecological pathology. In general,

these contributions are well illustrated and are provided with generous reference lists. They provide a valuable review of current knowledge at the ultrastructural level.

The title of this series may possibly mislead. The aim is not merely to document those specific EM findings which will alter or confirm a difficult histological diagnosis, but to review the wider applications of EM in human pathology. This is the essential foundation for ultrastructural studies which may allow the future re-evaluation of diagnostic criteria. And yet, even if the title is viewed in the restrictive sense, throughout this book one finds numerous examples of how electron microscopy can resolve problems of tumour histogenesis which have always troubled the histopathologist.

Electron microscopy already is, or should be, an integral part of the armament of the diagnostic pathologist. This book is a well argued statement of the art. The reviewer awaits the appearance of subsequent volumes and will be well satisfied with the series if it lives up to the high standard set by this book.

P. G. TONER

Blood Transfusion in Clinical Medicine. 6th edition. By P. L. Mollison. (Pp. xx + 884; illustrated; £22.50.) Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Melbourne: Blackwell Scientific Publications.

Here we are, once again, right on time with the next edition of 'Mollison'. Six editions at five-yearly intervals have maintained this book in the leading position of reference works on blood transfusion and immunohaematology for nearly 30 years. The subject has grown immensely, yet the author and his publishers have kept the book to manageable proportions. The main chapters remain much as before but the accent of discussion has changed emphasis over the years. For example, the chapter on the Rh blood group system devotes much more space to practical issues surrounding the suppression of Rh haemolytic disease of the newborn and its treatment.

Recognising the growing sophistication of blood donation techniques, Professor Mollison has devoted a new chapter to this subject so as to give the reader guidance on the use and misuse of cell separators. Likewise, because of the