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

growing importance of platelet, leucocyte, and serum antigens, a whole new chapter is devoted to these. Practically every chapter has been updated. Noticeably improved are sections dealing with complement, the low-ionic-strength blood grouping techniques, and the serum groups. As only 50 more pages have been added since the fifth edition, there has been, of necessity, some curtailment of discussions on certain topics, but this is compensated for by 10 more pages of references so that this book remains an excellent starting point for anyone wishing to trace a blood transfusion subject through the literature.

The book must be heavy going for those who do not profess to specialise in blood transfusion but every clinician should be encouraged to read at least Chapters 2 and 3, which deal so expertly with blood component therapy.

It would be easy to cite one or two important papers which should have received a mention but the reviewer would prefer to comment on the incredible performance of the author, sustained over such a long period. One is left wondering how Professor Mollison finds time to cut his grass and prune his roses.

W. J. JENKINS

Systemic Pathology. 2nd edition. Volume 4. Urinary System, Reproductive System, Breasts, Endocrine System. 38 authors. Edited by W. St. C. Symmers. (Pp. viii + 700 + Index Pp. 84; illustrated; £40.00.) Edinburgh, London, New York: Churchill Livingstone. 1978.

The fourth volume of the new edition of *Systemic Pathology* is the largest but not the last. Despite the original intention to complete in four volumes there are still two more to come. In this, there are sections of great importance to all histopathologists—gynaecological pathology, breasts, kidneys, and endocrines.

The major change since the last edition is the expansion and re-writing of the section on the kidneys by K. A. Porter. The features of glomerulonephritis are clearly set out in short paragraphs describing the changes seen by light and electron microscopy together with the characteristic findings of immunofluorescence. There are many new electron micrographs and illustrations of immunofluorescent changes. An enlarged section on renal histopathology in systemic diseases will also be found to be useful. Criticisms can be only very minor, and in

the breast section photomicrographs of one disease sometimes appear on pages with headings and texts of others; infiltrating lobular carcinoma is mentioned only in passing, and medullary carcinoma of breast with lymphoid stroma is not found as a separate entity.

This volume increases the enviable reputation of *Systemic Pathology* for readability combined with quickly accessible reference information. The careful editing throughout and the excellent index, prepared by the editor and his wife, add lustre to the overall excellence of this work.

R. A. B. DRURY

Chromogenic Peptide Substrates. Chemistry and Clinical Usage. Edited by M. F. Scully and V. V. Kakkar. (Pp. 288; illustrated; £14.00.) Edinburgh, New York: Churchill Livingstone. 1979.

This small book is a record of the International Symposium on Chromogenic Substrates, in London, in October 1977. It is divided into four sections: fundamental considerations, measurement of coagulation factors, measurement of fibrinolytic factors, and measurement of inhibitors of coagulation and fibrinolysis, and thus covers almost every aspect of chromogenic substrates from history and methodology to the expectations for future development. For the research worker and the haematologist involved with large numbers of coagulation factor assays, the book is an essential introduction to a new and promising field. Many interesting points can be found in the discussion which has obviously been faithfully recorded; the English is at times bizarre but almost always understandable.

Warmly recommended to those in the field of haemostasis.

M. BROZOVIC

CRC Handbook Series in Clinical Laboratory Science. Section C Pathology, Volume I. Editor in Chief: D. Seligson. Section Editor: R. Yesner. Volume Editor: B. H. Waksman. (Pp. 351; illustrated; £43.50.) Florida: CRC Press Inc. 1978.

This book is a collation of data relating to the immunological investigation of patients with immune disorders. It consists for the most part of tables and figures culled from publications in specialist journals, monographs, and textbooks. Most of these illustrations are presented in the original form without commentary or modification

although some appear to have additional footnotes suitable for publication in this volume. These illustrations are interspersed with brief statements explaining the rationale for their inclusion and the relevance of the reproduced data for the practice of clinical immunology. The final result is an unconventional medley of graphic immunology in a style which resembles that employed by many purveyors of encyclopaedias of 'general knowledge'. This novel approach certainly gives the book some advantages to which other textbooks of clinical immunology cannot aspire. If there are scientists or clinicians who have coffee tables in their departments which need embellishing, this book would be perfect for the purpose, since it is admirably suited for browsing. Lecturers in a hurry to prepare material at short notice on unfamiliar topics will also find it indispensable because the information for such purposes is suitably displayed for photographic reproductions and the basic information is also interspersed with experimental observations from publications of greater or lesser degrees of obscurity which can give their talk the verisimilitude of deeper familiarity with the subject.

More seriously, one should consider what advantages this kind of presentation has over more conventional textbooks. In considering established data and procedures which are now fully embodied in the practice of immunology both at the bedside and in the laboratory, this book has the benefits of clarity and precision. Unfortunately there are many aspects of experimental immunology which may never become part of clinical practice or which have already fallen by the wayside. It is the responsibility of authors and editors to try to sieve information of lasting value from the merely ephemeral. In this respect the book is a conspicuous failure. There are dozens of pages reproducing speculative, experimental data which were perfectly suitable for learned journals but which have no place in a volume purporting to present immunology for the practising clinician. Many of the experiments concerning transfer factor, blocking factors in experimental cancer, and the detection of lymphokines are already passing into oblivion. Editorial comment is either non-existent or consists of simple, facile statements such as (page 16) 'Immunologic tests particularly of cell-mediated immunity to tissue antigens, are of primary importance in a large number of auto-immune diseases recog-