surveyed in the comprehensive and authoritative manner that has been attempted by the present authors, all of whom are themselves active contributors to the field of alkaline phosphatase research. This book will therefore remain a valuable reference work for many years for all who are interested in clinical and indeed other aspects of this enzyme.

PETERS

**Biopsy Pathology of the Small Intestine.** FD Lee and PG Toner. (Pp xi + 188; illustrated; £12.00.) Chapman and Hall. 1980.

The advent of peroral small intestinal biopsy revolutionised the study of malabsorption syndromes. This carefully prepared little volume is intended to guide hospital pathologists through this interesting and sometimes difficult subject. There is a concise account of methods used in handling biopsy material followed by sections on normal appearances and on the assessment of intestinal abnormality. The second part of the book gives brief descriptions of various specific disease processes. The photomicrographs are all relevant and of good technical quality and both scanning and transmission electron micrographs are used freely. This book will be of value as a bench companion to any histopathologist faced with diagnostic problems involving small intestinal biopsies.

RA HARKNESS


This is not a comprehensive textbook on renal disease but is a series of essays written by acknowledged specialists within the field of nephrology, and the fact that this is the fourth edition is in itself evidence of the book’s popularity and usefulness. The editors have obtained contributions from 46 worldwide authorities. There are several important new contributions: Maur and Shiv give an up-to-date account of views on the structure and function of the mesangium in health and disease; there is a notable and authoritative plain man’s guide to the significance of the complement system in renal disease by Peters and Lachmann; a concise and lucid summary of all aspects of analgesic abuse is given by Gower; paediatric nephrology has a fresh prominence in excellent chapters on obstructive nephropathy and on renal failure in childhood; the wider significance of kidney disorders is brought into focus by Hutt’s contribution on geographical pathology. All the chapters are accompanied by copious references.

There is a strong interdisciplinary approach throughout the book, but one notable exception to this occurs in the account of the pathophysiology of acute renal failure, which omits mention of the work of Fry and Cattell on the radiological findings in this condition and their significance in any hypothesis on the pathogenesis of oliguria.

This is an important new edition which deserves a place in every medical library. By today’s standards it is not expensive.

MS DUNNILL

**Clinical Bacteriology.** PW Ross. (Pp 158; illustrated; £2-95.) Churchill Livingstone. 1979.

Dr Ross has based his textbook on an approach to microbiology by diseases rather than by microorganisms. As with most pioneering ventures the book has strong and weak points. Students are likely to enjoy it because of the obvious clinical relevance but it fails to get across the more purely microbiological aspects. With this reservation I believe that the book would provide a useful companion to a course in clinical bacteriology.

The material, particularly the two-thirds devoted to systems, is clearly and simply presented—with the exception of the ruga bag of organisms including viruses and parasites attached to the otherwise excellent diagrams. This is a brave and novel approach and without any doubt fills a gap. I look forward to a second edition that solves the minor problems related to what the book contains and at least gives guidance on what is to be done about what is not there.

IAN PHILLIPS