Plasma Proteins. Ed B Blomback and LA Hanson. (Pp xvi + 401; illustrated; £22.50.) John Wiley. 1979.

Originally published in Sweden, this English edition has been revised and updated and follows an earlier monograph on blood coagulation also co-edited and distributed by KABI.

A short review of the history of plasma protein chemistry introduces the reader to chapters on lipid and other transport proteins, immunological mechanisms including transplantation and oncology, coagulation and fibrinolysis, with a final chapter on plasma proteins as clinical diagnostic aids.

The editors do not claim that this is a textbook and point out themselves that it is unbalanced. This is particularly evident when the chapters on Blood Group Serology and Coagulation and Fibrinolysis are compared; the former appears to be aimed at the pathology student, and the latter at the specialist. There are a number of text errors, some legends lack sufficient detail, and a number of methodologies briefly referred to in the text are unreferenced.

This book is a valuable collection of information on many aspects of plasma proteins and should prove useful not only to workers in this field but also to trainee pathologists and interested clinicians.

BM SLAVIN

Advances in Medical Oncology, Research, and Education. Proceedings of the 12th International Cancer Congress, UICC, Buenos Aires, 1978. Gen Eds A Canonico, O Estevey, R Chacon, and S Bay. Vol II. Cancer Control (Pp 320); Vol IV. Biological Basis for Cancer Diagnosis (Pp 311); Vol VIII. Gynaecological Cancer (Pp 326); Vol IX. Digestive Cancer (Pp 404). £25 each. Pergamon Press. 1979.

These four volumes are taken from a total collection of 12 volumes covering the proceedings of the 12th International Cancer Congress in Buenos Aires in 1978. They are most welcome since many people felt unable to travel to Argentina, either because of the distance involved or for political reasons. (An alternative conference was held in Paris!)

Inevitably the standard of the papers is uneven, and it would be impossible to list the presentations in a short book review. But the range is comprehensive from the

epidemiology of oesophageal cancer in Iran and South Africa to some biological work on cyclic nucleotides in Colorado.

In the gynaecological volume, 35 papers are presented. Some of the papers mention the problems of the FIGO staging system and illustrate the mammoth task of collecting adequate numbers of each stage and sub-stage in any particular series. It was disappointing that so few papers were devoted to ovarian cancer, the commonest cause of gynaecological death in women. Again two of those presented were not in English and have not been given English abstracts.

Volume II on Cancer Control is of great interest in view of the controversy in the UK over the value of public cancer educational programmes. The complete collection of papers must form an essential part of any oncological library. The format is in typescript rather than bookprint, presumably for rapid publication, but the volumes are beautifully bound.

WS LOWRY

Advances in Medical Oncology, Research, and Education. Proceedings of the 12th International Cancer Congress, UICC, Buenos Aires, 1978. Gen Eds A Canonico, O Estevey, R Chacon, and S Bay. Vol V. Basis For Cancer Therapy I (Pp 288); Vol VII. Leukemia and non-Hodgkin Lymphoma (Pp 252); Vol X. Clinical Cancer Principal Sites-I (Pp 265). £25 each. Pergamon Press. 1979.

Volume V, edited by BW Fox, contains papers from the XII International Cancer Congress held in Buenos Aires in October 1978. The four sections on the development of new anti-tumour agents, the biological basis for cancer chemotherapy, hormones, and cancer, and modern trends in cancer surgery, contain 34 papers by recognised authorities and are generally well referenced. Volume VII, edited by D Crowther, contains 25 papers from the same meeting. Topics covered include the increasing incidence of leukaemia in the elderly, cell surface and genetic markers in ALL, histopathological classifications, and the treatment of lymphomas. Volume X, edited by S Kumar, is a collection of papers from the same meeting. There are 16 papers on melanomas, nine on sarcomas, and eight on childhood tumours, including three disappointing papers on the important subject of the acute and

chronic toxicities of modern treatment. I would particularly recommend volume V as containing information which is less readily available elsewhere than that in the other two books.

JF SMYTH

Gynecologic and Obstetric Pathology. ER Novak and JD Woodruff. (Pp xxi + 795; 902 illustrations, 18 in colour; £23.50.) WB Saunders. 1979.

Novak's *Gynecologic and Obstetric Pathology* has over the years acquired a worldwide reputation and has come to be revered by many histopathologists. This, the eighth edition, while still giving a wide coverage of the subject, including a new section by Pauerstein on the pathology of the placenta, invites criticism on a variety of counts. The photomicrographs, although liberally illustrating the text, are in many instances pale, indistinct, and of poor quality. The references are all too frequently incomplete and inaccurate, and many modern publications of importance are omitted; comparatively little attention is paid to European literature. With regard to individual chapters, the section on vulval dystrophies confuses the issue as much as ever and ignores the simplified nomenclature developed by the International Society for the Study of Vulval Diseases. Although not overlooked in the chapter on the cervix, modern concepts of cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN) and its role in the natural history of cervical carcinoma are not given the prominence they deserve. Four alternative classifications of ovarian tumours are offered; that recommended by the WHO, however, is dismissed as clinically unhelpful, an attitude which seems highly contentious and difficult to defend.

This edition does not, I feel, enhance the former reputation of the book and compares indifferently with other recent publications on the same subject.

JOW BEILBY

The Megaloblastic Anaemias. 2nd ed. I Chanarin. (Pp ix + 783; illustrated; £52.50.) Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1979.

As Dr Chanarin mentions in his preface to this second edition, there have been considerable advances in information in this field. The text has thus been rewritten with the inclusion of a colour plate, and

the references (4258 in 225 pages) are now placed at the end of the book. These latter are generally of recent origin, and the whole work is therefore completely up to date, again with the clinical aspects occupying the second half.

The greatest changes have been in the biochemical field, particularly regarding B₁₂ and folate metabolism and transport and further understanding of intrinsic factor. It is important to appreciate that folate measurement by radio assay is by no means as reliable a procedure at the present time compared with the same methodology for vitamin B₁₂, and clearly further work is necessary here before reliance can be placed on commercial kits.

This book by an acknowledged expert is a pleasure to read and an excellent reference text, although I felt that the index could be more detailed. At the price, however, it is more likely to find its way into libraries than into individual collections, which seems a pity. It was thought to have been expensive at £10 in 1970! This apart, the monograph is strongly recommended.

HM CLINK

Clinical Hypertension. JD Swales. (Pp xv + 207; illustrated; £6.50 paperback, £10.50 hardback.) Chapman and Hall. 1979.

I read this little book in two short evenings and enjoyed it. It is a clearly written account of the problems facing a clinician wanting to understand or treat hypertension. About half the book is concerned with mechanisms. Very few of these are properly understood and, even when they are, they explain hypertension in only a tiny proportion of patients. For the commoner forms, essential hypertension and chronic renal hypertension, the mystery remains. Professor Swales gives a balanced account of the different hypotheses: dietary salt, volume expansion, mineralocorticoids, renin, catecholamines, the nervous system, structural changes in blood vessels, faulty dilator mechanisms, and combinations of these. The reader cannot reliably assess the relative importance of these claims as the evidence presented is too sparse, but at least he can see that different possibilities exist, and this is not always possible in a treatise on mechanisms.

The second half of the book is concerned with clinical features, investigation,

and drugs, each dealt with separately in the usual way. There is a useful chapter on management, emphasising the important point that hypertension is not a stereotype with all patients requiring all investigations and at the same tempo. Another chapter deals as well as anyone could with the no-man's land of hypertension in pregnancy.

Every year new texts appear on hypertension: symposia reports, journal supplements, large reviews, multiauthor texts, and scholarly monographs. This is briefer, cheaper, clearer, and less detailed than most. It is ideal for anyone wanting a bird's-eye view of a very large field. It does not provide a detailed view of activity in any part of the field but it tells the reader where to look for it.

There are a few minor mistakes and, inevitably, there were parts I did not agree with—diagnosis and surgical prognosis, for example, were not adequately distinguished in renal hypertension—but the fact remains that if I had not been given a copy (the cheaper paperback version at £6.50) I would have bought one for myself.

AF LEVER

Notices

Early diagnosis of testicular cancer
Copenhagen, Denmark, 5-7 November 1980

An international symposium and workshop on early testicular cancer and carcinoma in-situ will be organised by the Nordic Association for Andrology. Further particulars may be obtained from Dr NE Skakkebaek, Laboratory of Reproductive Biology, 4052 Rigshospitalet, Blegdamsvej 9, DK 2100, Copenhagen Ø, Denmark.

3rd European Symposium for Stereology

The Third European Symposium for Stereology will be held in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, 22 to 27 June 1981. For detailed information please write to Prof Dr Miroslav Kališnik, 3rd European Symposium for Stereology, Institute for Histology and Embryology, PO Box 10, 61105 Ljubljana, Yugoslavia.

2nd International Dermatopathology Symposium

The Second International Dermatopathology Symposium, entitled 'Dilemmas and Directions in Differential Diagnosis', will be held at Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London, 12-15 July 1981.

All enquiries should be addressed to Marcus Summersfield, London Symposium 1981, Conference Co-ordinates, Regent House, 60 King Street, Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 3SH, with the exception of specific enquires regarding the medical aspects of the programme, which should be addressed to Professor E Wilson Jones, Institute of Dermatology, St John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, London WC2H 7BJ.

XI Triennial World Congress of WASP

The XI Triennial World Congress of WASP (World Association of Societies of Pathology and Clinical Pathology) will take place in Jerusalem, 21-25 September 1981.

For further information please write to the Chairman of the Organising Committee, The XI Triennial World Congress of WASP, PO Box 16271, Tel Aviv, Israel.