

opportunity is also taken to clarify existing terminology and definitions and contradictions are well made. The sections on sex-linked and late onset hypo- $\gamma$ -globulinaemia are particularly clear and will dispel the confusion in the term "common variable immunodeficiency". I regret that no attempt was made to cover secondary immunodeficiency for numerically this variety is probably more important. Nevertheless, the seven pages devoted to malignancy and immunodeficiency disease are a valuable précis of much information.

Considerations of basic immunology are confined to a 4½ page introductory chapter and an "end-piece" on the "immunological background to the pathogenesis of immunodeficiency diseases". The detailed considerations of immunochemical and immuno-biological perturbations found within the body of the text warrant rather more of a basic framework than these rather chatty sections provide and the use of diagrammatic material would greatly benefit the text. Some of the tables take a lot of "getting into" and lose their impact. There must be few books that contain facing pages (eg. 88 and 89) with type-script opposed by 180°. The complement pathway (on page 283) is clear but misleading. No doubt these minor blemishes will be corrected in the much sought after second edition.

"Asherson and Webster" should be in every hospital library and a frequent source of reference for all practising paediatricians, adult physicians, pathologists and, not least, immunologists of all shades. I am sure that many patients will benefit from its publication.

WG REEVES

**Cancer of the Head and Neck.** SY Suen and EN Myers. (Pp 905; illustrated; £45.) Churchill Livingstone. 1981.

"Cancer of the Head and Neck" is a most readable book by 54 authors predominantly from the USA. It is at first glance for surgeons only. Soon it becomes evident that there is in every surgeon a pathologist trying to get out. There is much of interest to the histopathologist enhanced by a valuable chapter by Batsakis who defines the role of the surgical pathologist under the headings "preanalytical" (obtaining essential clinical information—often lacking); "analytical"—dealing with the actual function of the histopathologist using all the modern tools of his trade; "post-

analytical" (reporting and consultation).

Closest surgical-pathological consultation at every phase of diagnosis and therapy is rightly advocated. To rely mainly on personal clinical experience as suggested by some authors may be a "practical" approach but lacks objectivity.

The production is excellent and most of the clinical illustrations are of good quality. This book ought to be available in all medical libraries as a source of up-to-date information.

I FRIEDMANN

**Functional Morphologic Changes in Female Sex Organs Induced by Exogenous Hormones.** Ed G Dallenbach-Hellweg. (Pp 234; illustrated; DM 54.) Springer-Verlag. 1980.

Pathologists increasingly receive tissue from the female genital tract in which the normal appearances has been markedly altered by the administration of exogenous steroids and hence there is a need for a systematic and detailed account of the morphological changes which may be encountered. Unfortunately this book, which contains the papers given at a symposium in Heidelberg in 1979, does not provide this. It contains much useful information, eg the results of prenatal exposure to diethylstilboestrol, the endometrial patterns seen after progesterone administration, the changes induced in the cervix and vagina by combined oestrogen/progesterone contraceptive pills. However, many of the contributions are too short and insufficiently detailed. This, allied to the eclecticism inherent in all conference proceedings, dilutes the value of this book to the diagnostic histopathologist.

H FOX

**Fundamentals of Hematology.** 2nd ed. RA Rifkind, A Bank, PA Marks, HL Nossel, RR Ellison, J Lindenbaum. (Pp 204; illustrated; £16.50.) Year Book Medical Publishers Inc. 1980.

This is a true textbook of haematology which can be recommended to undergraduates especially because of its exceptional clarity and conciseness. It would also give a sound background to non medical scientists because of its theme of relating disease to underlying biological events. Its explanations of those particular areas which students always find difficult to understand in haematology, eg the pentose shunt pathway and its relation-

ship to G6PD deficiency, osmotic fragility, the Coombs' test, intrinsic and extrinsic coagulation pathways and lymphocyte subpopulations are exemplary. Although the book is multi-authored its organizational pattern is firm, there are good simple diagrams and many lists and Tables. There are no coloured illustrations and morphology is only emphasised in relation to cell development and function. There is no British counterpart to this book—its only blemish may be the price of £16.50 for its 200 pages.

S ROBERTS

**Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System.** 6th ed. Dame Sheila Sherlock. (Pp 532; illustrated; £24.) Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1981.

One approaches new editions of classic texts with dutiful reverence but not a little anxiety, rather as one feels amongst the exhibits of the British Museum: there is still much to learn, yes, but have the shelves been dusted and the descriptions made more interesting? All such fears are immediately dispelled on looking at this new, sixth edition of Dame Sheila's great work on the liver and biliary system. This is no mere compilation of knowledge but a gift of experience and wisdom freshly distilled and still unparalleled. Moreover, the book looks and reads as new: presentation is attractive in the slim two-column format; much has been entirely rewritten with clear diagrams and crisp photographs; references pruned and brought up to date. It is difficult to find something to criticise: some of the colour plates which have never been entirely successful, should perhaps have been left out. This book is not written for pathologists but I would recommend anyone with an interest in the subject to acquire a copy.

PP ANTHONY

**Frontiers of Matrix Biology.** Vol 1. *Biology and Pathology of Elastic Tissues.* Eds AM Robert and L Robert. (Pp vii + 232; 112 figs; 31 tabs; Sw fr 124/DM 148/US\$ 74.25.) S Karger AG. 1980.

This book provides a detailed account of biochemical, physical, microscopical and chemical information on elastin. It includes a masterly review of the physical chemistry by Partridge and scholarly articles on electron microscopy structure, crosslinking and the relevance of elastin to atheromatous disease.