

Book reviews

A Colour Atlas of Haematological Cytology. 2nd ed. FGJ Hayhoe and RJ Flemans. (Pp 240; 150 colour photographs; £30.) Wolfe Medical Publications Limited. 1982.

Haematologists in training require an atlas of high quality photomicrographs for day-to-day reference as a supplement to microscopy. The 1969 first edition of Hayhoe and Flemans' atlas was widely appreciated and it now appears in a significantly improved second edition with more than double the number of photomicrographs, higher quality of reproduction, and a more efficient and attractive layout. The text is limited to short legends to the figures. These improvements will undoubtedly increase the atlas's popularity, and the new section on lymph node and spleen imprints, and also centrifuged deposits from cerebrospinal and pleural fluids is a further useful addition. Despite the authors' disclaimer that both marrow trephine sections need not be included since reporting on them is generally the province of histopathologists, trainees in haematology do require to be familiar with trephine morphology and many haematologists report on them. Trephine sections provide essential information for both diagnostic and training purposes. While this is an excellent atlas of the traditional marrow aspirate, a complementary chapter on marrow sections would increase its popularity even further.

J STUART

Organization and Methods for Endocrinology Laboratory Services. Report on a working Group. EURO Reports and Studies no 51. (Pp 18; paperback Sw fr 4.) WHO. 1981.

A common sense assessment of both the organisation of, and the methodologies used, in the assay of hormones in European countries is discussed in this short book.

The report points out the advantages and disadvantages of centralised and decentralised endocrinology services stressing the necessary close collaboration between the clinician and the laboratory worker. Minimum requirements in terms of equipment are listed for three different types of laboratory, while both internal and external quality control are briefly

discussed. It is pleasing to realise that in Britain we seem to have the situation well under control, but more difficult to understand why a British chemical pathologist practising hormonal analysis was not included in the listed participants.

This is an easily read book which will be of use in those countries where a nationwide endocrine laboratory service is currently being established.

GW PENNINGTON

Soft Ionization Biological Mass Spectrometry. Ed HR Morris. (Pp 152; illustrated; £18.) Heyden & Son Ltd. 1982.

The proceedings of a meeting are contained in this book which discusses the exciting prospect of soft ionisation processes and increased mass range making it possible to investigate thermally labile and low volatility molecules which are of importance in biological systems and hitherto outwith the scope of mass spectrometry. Its authors are selected international experts in their fields and it is an important book to read to appreciate the range of current developments and their potential to research in the biological sciences.

The application of mass spectrometry to biological materials has been limited in the past by the requirement that the sample must be in the vapour phase prior to ionisation and also by the molecular weight capable of detection. A chapter of the book is devoted to the implementation of high field magnets to extend mass range at maximum sensitivity thus permitting analysis of biopolymers such as peptides and oligosaccharides up to approximately 3000 amu. Electron impact and positive and negative chemical ionisation give the most useful structural information while field desorption has particular value for high mass and polarity compounds. This latter ionisation method is comprehensively reviewed and its elegant application described to the identification of carcinogen-modified DNA components. Other areas covered are Cf-plasma desorption mass spectrometry, laser desorption, fast atom bombardment, multiselector instruments, and the coupling of liquid chromatography.

AM LAWSON

Biology of Skin Cancer (excluding Melanomas). UICC Technical Report Series—vol 63. Ed OD Laerum and OH Iversen. (Pp 263; Sw fr 44.) Hans Huber Publishers. 1981.

Biology of Skin Cancer is the fifteenth of a series of workshops on the Biology of Human Cancer published by the International Union against Cancer. The book is published in soft back, has no diagrams or illustrations, but contains over one thousand references.

As an interested amateur in the cancer field I found the coverage comprehensive, and the sections on geographical racial variability, variation, chemical carcinogens, and ultraviolet induced cancers especially informative. Yet the information is curiously dated and static for all its comprehensiveness. Although every conceivable biochemical measurement of lipids, proteins, enzymes, cyclic nucleotides, prostaglandins, and cell kinetics are considered, there are few impressive differences between malignant and normal tissues. Perhaps eventually there will be convincing explanations of how carcinogens as diverse as polycyclic hydrocarbons, x-rays, ultraviolet light, viruses, and failures of DNA repair alter normal cells to cancerous ones and also what the molecular bases (at the protein or enzyme level) of these changes are.

In the meantime "state of the art" reviews such as this will be of some interest to pathologists, dermatologists, human geneticists, immunologists, oncologists, and medical students.

FM POPE

Hemophilia and Hemostasis. Progress in Clinical and Biological Research. Vol 72. Ed Doris Ménaché, Douglas MacN. Surgenor, Harlan Anderson. (Pp 282; illustrated; £20-50.) Alan R Liss Inc. 1981.

The proceedings of the American Red Cross 13th Annual Scientific Symposium held in Washington, D.C. on 14-15 May 1981 are reported in this book. It is really a festschrift dedicated to Professor Kenneth M. Brinkhouse for his distinguished contribution to coagulation and haemostasis and consists of a series of contributions from eminent workers in the field. The result is a series of fine chapters which lack any cohesion and I feel the book has been unfortunately titled. However the individual chapters by