Book reviews

tumours at present, but do serve to extend the corpus of pathological knowledge to the ultrastructural level and hopefully may be used to improve the classifications of the future.

One feature of the presentation which is a considerable irritation when looking up any particular lesion is that the text and the illustrations have been allowed to become increasingly asynchronous so that relevant photographs are rarely on the same page as the description and often are many pages away.

The chapter on inflammatory and degenerative joint conditions includes a considerable background of normal appearances and reactive changes produced in experimental animals and only a relatively short section on the changes of rheumatoid and osteoarthrits.

The section on non-neoplastic disorders of skeletal muscle may prove to be particularly useful. It describes the ultrastructure of normal muscle and the pathological changes which can be seen in the various organelles before going onto the characteristic features of the different myopathies.

On the whole this is a useful coverage of rather specialist areas for the general histopathologist/electron microscopist.


A review of clinical and microbiological aspects of chlamydial genital infections is presented in this book and, in particular, provides good coverage of those conditions in which C. trachomatis has recently been implicated—for example, infant pneumonia and salpingitis. It also contains an interesting and comprehensive chapter on the treatment of chlamydial infections.

The overriding interest of the authors in in vitro antibiotic testing is obviously reflected in the large amount of space given to this topic; an entire chapter is, likewise, devoted to various aspects of LGV, whilst the more common problem of relapsing NGU is mentioned only in passing.

It is difficult to decide at which group this book is aimed: it may be useful to clinicians as an introduction to, and a review of current chlamydial research. However, the technical descriptions throughout the text are inadequate and often inaccurate—for example, the microimmunofluorescence test. The appendix of laboratory procedures is of little practical use and the book would seem of limited value to those actively engaged in chlamydial research.


This book sets out to catalogue the entire range of recorded subcellular pathology: an impossible task, by the author's own admission. It is, however, probably the closest approach to that unreachable goal that any book, let alone a single-author volume, has yet achieved. Although sometimes opinionated, the text is a remarkable achievement as a survey of the broad field of cellular pathology. Half of the pages consist of electron micrographs and there are 3500 references to the literature, some to the light-microscopic background, and others to papers from all phases in the evolution of biological electron microscopy. Most of the illustrations are excellent, and the quality of the paper and printing is outstanding in every way. This may explain the remarkable price, which must surely set some new record. Nevertheless, despite the price, this book is one which any laboratory dealing with ultrastructural morphology and pathology will find invaluable as a source of reference to the many morphological peculiarities which accompany cellular dysfunction and disease.


Alcohol has surely displeased syphilis as the great mimic of disease. Its ravages have for too long been looked upon as falling only within the provinces of psychiatry and hepatology amongst medical practitioners. This authoritative, though relatively short volume, does much to dispel this idea. With 20 chapters by acknowledged experts in their respective fields drawn entirely from British practitioners and scientists, this volume deals with such varied topics as Alcohol and Nutrition, Histocompatibility Antigens, Alcohol and the Endocrine System, the Effect of Alcohol upon the Developing Foetus and its Role in the Pathogenesis of Muscular Disease, and Disease of the Heart and Blood Forming Tissues. The information is hang-up-to-date and presented in the concise style we have come to associate with the British Medical Bulletin of which this volume is a single offprint. Although the area of most interest to clinical pathologists—namely the use of laboratory methods to detect and diagnose excessive alcohol use, is not dealt with expressly in this volume, it will nonetheless be of great interest to all practitioners of clinical laboratory medicine. It can confidently be recommended as an important sourcebook of contemporary knowledge of the somatic manifestations of alcohol-induced disease, and is well worth its modest price.


There can be few, if any, pathologists who have not a greater experience of the treacherous field of the multiple choice question than Professor Bernard Lennox. Many would regard the presence of his name on the title page of an MCQ Tutor in Pathology as a virtual guarantee of high quality and they will not be disappointed.

The questions are searching without being unduly recondite and the inclusion of clear and pithy answers on the reverse side of each page of questions is particularly helpful. This book, like its predecessor should be a source not only of help but of enjoyment to students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels who are preparing for examinations in pathology.


This article, running to 112 pages, was first published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute in June 1981. The review is now produced as a paperback book and it is emphasised that it is also addressed to the non-specialist. The authors critically examine the premise that many forms of cancer are attributable to occupational hazards and may therefore be preventable.

In their report, which is epitomised by clarity of presentation, a masterly command of language, and an incisive critical approach, the authors conclude that, with the excep-

Developments in Antibiotic Treatment of Respiratory Infections reports the proceedings of a conference held in June 1980 at which various European contributors surveyed the subject from a clinical, microbiological and therapeutic perspective. The book is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the microbiological aspects looks at trends in the susceptibility of Haemophilus influenzae, Streptococcus pneumoniae and Staphylococcus aureus. A further paper examines the concept of colonisation resistance (CR) as it relates to the respiratory tract and presents information based on animal experiments that divide antimicrobial drugs according to their effect on CR. The second section on pharmacokinetics outlines and reviews the methodological difficulties in studying drug penetration of sputum, middle ear and sinuses. The final section discusses the clinical management of sinusitis, otitis and chronic bronchitis together with contributions on Legionnaires’ disease, Mycoplasma pneumoniae infection and respiratory infections in the immunocompromised host. Three additional chapters look at antibiotic prescribing in relation to influenza outbreaks, general practice and paediatric prescribing in respiratory tract infections. Finally, the editor reviews the present position and future possibilities for prevention through vaccination.

This volume, like many conference proceedings, suffers from the selective perspective it provides. It is unlikely to bring about significant improvements in the antibiotic treatment of respiratory infections although for the topics covered it certainly spells out the state of the art most thoroughly.

RG FINCH


This is the fifth volume in a series which aims to cover all the fields of research in which isoenzyme studies are of interest. It is therefore to be expected that the number of reviews of direct relevance to chemical pathology and medicine will vary from volume to volume. However, the present volume includes two valuable and timely reviews of topics of medical interest: Human β-Galactosidases: Molecular and Clinical Aspects (LS Rittmann and JS O’Brien), and Resurgence of Fetal Isozymes in Cancer (F Schapira). Both provide valuable and up-to-date summaries of information which is not readily available elsewhere in a collected form.

Of the other reviews in this volume, that on RNA Polymerases in Neoplasia, (KM Rose, BW Duceman and SB Jacob) will undoubtedly be of interest to biochemists and others concerned with cancer research. The volume is completed by reviews on the Partitioning of Biochemical Pathways with Isozyme Systems (RA Jensen and GS Byng), Genetic Control, Developmental Expression and Biochemical Properties of Plant Peptidases (LO Vodkin and JG Scandalias), and Immunochemical Approaches to Studies of Isozyme Regulation in Higher Plants (J Daussant and A Skakoun). These chapters will appeal mainly to the isoenzyme specialist who will find them interesting and authoritative.

D W MOSS

Histological Typing of Tumours of the Eye and Its Adnexa. LE Zimmerman and LH Sobin. (Pp 82 plus 150 colour figs; Sw fr 210; book only without colour figs Sw fr 60.) World Health Organisation. 1982.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide classifications, morphological descriptions, and illustrations of the most important tumours of the globe, optic nerve, orbit, eyelids, conjunctiva, and lacrimal system. Non-neoplastic lesions which have diagnostic relevance (eg phakomas and inflammatory disease) are also included. The book will undoubtedly be of value in the general pathology laboratory and is essential for ophthalmic pathologists. The 150 colour illustrations are of a very high standard, although in general the magnifications are low and some of the figures could have been improved by high magnification inserts. The least impressive section is that on lymphoid hyperplasia and neoplasia, while the most valuable sections are concerned with classification of melanotic tumours of the globe and conjunctiva. The colour transparencies which are also available are invaluable for teaching purposes.

WR LEE


This volume attempts to cover 14 different subject areas, including laboratory management and instrumentation, biochemistry of pituitary and non-polypeptide hormones, biochemical investigations in gastrointestinal, renal and malignant disease, as well as toxicology and therapeutic drug monitoring. The reviews have been compiled in a variety of ways. Some have, literally, attempted to provide a “snapshot” of the summarising the important papers published in their subject area in a restricted period, centred on 1980. For instance, 561 papers on cancer are referred to in an article of approximately 15 000 words, and 418 papers in a somewhat shorter but equally wide-ranging review of biochemical aspects of genetic disease. Such reviews are, in my opinion, less balanced and helpful than those which concentrate on a few selected aspects, with literature coverage extending back over several years and some critical discussion, as in the case of the chapter on clinical enzymology.

The reference lists, which together occupy about 113 pages of the 464 pages of text, would have been much more helpful if they had included the titles of articles as well as both first and last pages, and a policy decision to adopt this system of quoting references in future volumes could have a major impact on the way in which the next reviews are written. Many potential readers might prefer to conduct their own MEDLARS search rather than depend upon this expensive book as a potential source of critical reviews. Nevertheless, on balance, I feel the book contains sufficient value to be recommended for purchase.

LG WHITBY