

## Book reviews

**Human Cancer Markers.** Ed Stewart Sell and Britta Wahren. (Pp 428; illustrated; \$69.50.) The Humana Press Inc. 1982.

There have been two books concerned with tumour markers in the Contemporary Biomedicine series. Whereas the first one dealt with certain more fundamental aspects of oncodevelopmental markers, the present edition is more concerned with human tumours and the clinical utility of markers.

This review is timely and should provide a good basis in view of the fact that many new markers are being and will be described through the use of the novel hybridoma technology. In this context, the first series of chapters are devoted to monoclonal antibodies and human tumours and provide a useful resumé of the technique and its application for those to whom it may not be familiar. Thereafter, there is a systematic approach to tumours at different sites and the range of markers which have been proposed for them.

Whilst there is little novel in each section, and some chapters have appeared in other texts, their assembly in one book is useful making it an important reference for those interested in this aspect of oncology.

A MUNRO NEVILLE

**A Short Textbook of Chemical Pathology.** 4th ed. DN Baron. (Pp 292; illustrated; paperback £5.25.) Hodder & Stoughton. 1982.

Previous editions of this book were published in 1957, 1969, and 1973, since when many changes have occurred in chemical pathology. It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that large sections of text persist, literally word for word. The two opening chapters have been restructured, and the endocrine chapter enlarged with several new figures added. Molar units have been introduced, normal values renamed reference values, multi-channel analysers and automatic blood gas analysers mentioned, and the sensitivity and specificity of tests discussed. New investigations described include lithium, zinc, creatine kinase isoenzymes, oxygen, gut hormones, prolactin and placental lactogen, and comments about treatment (e.g. parenteral nutrition) have been updated.

The size of this book, and the range of topics it seeks to cover (the biochemical

basis of disease, the investigation of disease by chemical tests, as well as some aspects of practical therapeutics), together account for the didactic style. The book is reasonably priced, and is likely to be popular with medical undergraduates.

LG WHITBY

**Fetal and Neonatal Pathology.** Ed AJ Barson. (Pp 262; illustrated; £13.50.) WB Saunders Company Ltd. 1982.

It may be difficult for some pathologists performing only occasional necropsies on the fetus and neonate to appreciate how much increasing interest in prenatal diagnosis, advances in neonatal care, and the requirements of genetic counselling have added to the relevance of the postmortem examination. This book, based on a symposium organised by the Royal College of Pathologists in April 1981, consists of seventeen articles aimed at keeping the general pathologist informed of current advances and problems related to perinatal pathology. The subjects reviewed deal both with the possibilities of antenatal screening and also with special aspects of perinatal necropsies. The chapters on chromosome disorders (A McDermott), metabolic defects (AD Patrick), haematological problems (E Letsky) and congenital heart disease (RH Anderson and SY Ho), are especially useful summaries of current advances and applications. This is a concise topical book which can be recommended for the general pathologist and all concerned with maintaining and improving the relevance of perinatal pathology.

J PRYSE-DAVIES

**Microbes, Man and Animals.** Alan H Linton. (Pp 342; illustrated; £19.50.) John Wiley & Sons Limited. 1982.

Dr Linton and the late Dr Anna Mayr-Harting planned this book on the basis of their course on pathogenicity and epidemiology for honours microbiology students in the University of Bristol. With the help of five Bristol colleagues, Dr Linton has completed it. Part I contains seven chapters on the mechanisms of microbial pathogenicity, host defences in health and disease, and the interactions between these in the individual host. Part II deals with the general principles of epidemiology and the methods for controlling disease in the community. In Part III the principles already discussed are illustrated by selected studies on some of

the zoonoses and waterborne, airborne, contact-conveyed, arthropod-borne, and fungal diseases.

The book was written primarily for non-medical students. How useful would it be for medical readers? It explains, for its intended readers, much of what a medical student will have learned from his other courses, but not in enough detail for it to replace the standard texts on microbiology, immunology, and epidemiology. It does, however, present aspects of the host-parasite interaction that do not always get enough treatment in systematic texts. It would provide informative and interesting reading for the student who can spare the time to use it to supplement his basic work.

R BLOWERS

**Pulmonary Pathology.** MS Dunnill. (Pp 406; illustrated; £30.) Churchill Livingstone. 1982.

*Pulmonary Pathology* enters a field which has so far been dominated by Spencer's two-volume *Pathology of the Lung*. Not many readers will need to purchase both these books and Dunnill must therefore be judged alongside Spencer. The two books cover exactly the same ground, except for tuberculosis which has always been a glaring omission from Spencer. Dunnill covers all of lung pathology in just under half the number of pages required by Spencer and at about half the cost. Some of the illustrations suggest the after thought "and at half the quality" but this would be unfair; Spencer's publishers have chosen a glossy paper whilst Dunnill's have probably gauged the market better and selected a quite presentable but non-gloss finish. Many will prefer the briefer more succinct approach taken by Dunnill and will not miss the expansive scholarship and wider review afforded by Spencer. Differences are of course to be found in those areas in which the respective authors have special expertise. Dunnill sensibly starts with a chapter on pulmonary defence mechanisms, an important area which he has recently reviewed in masterly fashion elsewhere. Other areas in which Dunnill excels are evident when one reads the chapters on pulmonary oedema and shock lung, chronic bronchitis, asthma, and emphysema. Dunnill may well have got carried away with morphometry, another area in which he has particular expertise, but no, the emphasis placed on this important aspect of pathology is just about right and indeed the book throughout is very well balanced. There are those who will wish to buy the most comprehensive account available regardless of cost but many will find that *Pulmonary Pathology* fully satisfies their every requirement.

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