

## Book reviews

the important pathogens and antimicrobial drugs.

A typical chapter on a body system begins with a reminder of its normal microbial flora and an outline of the microbial diseases to which it is liable. Then follows full discussion of the relevant laboratory investigations, without technical details but with sound comment on their interpretation and value. In the whole book I could detect the omission of only one important point in the instructions for collecting material for the tests: there is no mention of the fact, known to anyone who has worked in the tropics, that in the investigation of a condition in which enteric fever is a possibility, the blood-culture outfit must include an additional bottle containing bile broth which gives isolation of *Salmonella typhi* more often and earlier than do other culture media, possibly because it releases bacterial cells from phagocytes. Antimicrobial chemotherapy is thoroughly and authoritatively described and is as up to date as any book can be in this rapidly changing field. For readers who are in a hurry, much of the textual material is presented also in tables and figures, of which most are useful though some of them complicate what would otherwise be fairly simple.

The excellence of the information in the book is not matched by the style in which it is written. In most places the looseness of expression is only irritating, in others it is confusing, and in a few it conveys a meaning opposite to what was intended; moreover, the unskilful use of words adds possibly 50 pages to the book. The index is grossly inadequate; one can open the book at almost any page and find topics that deserve indexing but do not get it. One wonders what principle led the author to index the Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome but not bronchitis and Gram-negative shock, or carbenicillin but not gentamicin.

Despite the editorial defects, the content of the book is so good that any doctor who has the care of patients and any who works in a laboratory should be glad to have it for general reading and for urgent reference.

R BLOWERS

**Cell Structure.** An Introduction to Biomedical Electron Microscopy. 3rd ed. KE Carr and PG Toner. (Pp 388; illustrated; £19.50.) Churchill Livingstone. 1982.

The first and second editions of this book firmly established it as one of the best introductions to biomedical electron microscopy. The third edition brings the text

up to date with changes which have taken place in the field of electron microscopy, but does not alter the basic successful format of previous editions. Approximately the first half of the book is occupied by text and explanatory line drawings—many of which have been redrawn and added to. The second half of the book is occupied by electron micrographs and appropriate detailed captions. The micrographs, both transmission and scanning, are of consistently excellent quality. As an introduction to electron microscopy or for constant reference, possession of this book is mandatory for all Histology and Pathology EM units.

DA LEVISON

**An Introduction to the Principles of Disease.** 2nd ed. John B Walter, (Pp 671; illustrated; £18.50.) WB Saunders Company. 1982.

The intention of this book is as a primer for those medical students completing their preclinical studies and about to embark on the study of clinical medicine. It is in effect a conventional textbook of pathology divided equally between general and systematic pathology. The section on general pathology would serve as a clearly set out outline of the subject but is not of sufficient depth for British medical students. The remaining part of the book is little more than a short medical encyclopaedia. Thus malignant lymphomas are dealt with in just one page, whilst tuberculosis of the intestine receives a six worded sentence. There are, too, peculiarities of emphasis and the short descriptions of disease are not always as informative as they could be. In the fourteen lines devoted to Crohn's disease the word 'granuloma' does not appear. Almost equal space is given to plasma cell mastitis. Although its brevity may be initially appealing, I would not recommend this book to medical students.

PG ISAACSON

**Pathology of the Liver and Biliary Tract.** Boris H Ruebner and Carolyn K Montgomery. (Pp 371; illustrated; £30.75.) John Wiley & Sons Limited. 1982.

*Pathology of the Liver and Biliary Tract* is the second in a new series entitled Wiley Series in Surgical Pathology and is much more medical than surgical by the very nature of its subject. The first chapter is on a general approach to hepatic pathology which lays down guidelines on specimen handling, advice on some recently introduced techniques, and helpful notes on the general

principles of interpretation. This is followed by detailed consideration of liver diseases under conventional headings which, however, are sometimes rather ill defined and overlapping, eg the chapters on hyperbilirubinaemia in infancy, on metabolic diseases, and the one on abnormal hepatic storage products. The chapter on drug injury follows that on tumours whereas it would fit better with chapters on hepatitis and cholestasis. There are only eleven pages on alcoholic liver injury, the same as on non-specific fatty change. Organization and balance could perhaps be improved in the next edition and so could the spelling mistakes, a minority of illustrations, and the index which is too brief. The outstanding feature of the book which make its purchase worthwhile (in spite of the high cost) is a scholarly cover of practically every form of liver disease supported by a vast number of up-to-date references, nearly three hundred for drugs alone. There is even a small but useful chapter on the gall bladder. The cognoscenti may quibble with a number of statements and terms, particularly in the chapters on cirrhosis and the one on tumours, but for the references alone this is a mine of information and the most up-to-date amongst its peers.

PP ANTHONY

**Clinical Laboratory Methods.** JD Bauer. 9th ed. (Pp 1235; illustrated; £28.) Year Book Medical Publishers Ltd. 1982.

Here is an updated version of a well known book, which has appeared regularly since 1936; the format is now the two column presentation, clearly printed on the quality paper one associates with this publisher.

A multi-author series of units covers basic laboratory rules, safety and quality control, then haematology (including transfusion), clinical chemistry, and microbiology. A new addition is Sonnenwirth's section on clinical immunology. All this takes 1100 pages with clear black and white diagrams, tables and photomicrographs (19 in colour). For the beginner more of these need the magnification included. A remarkable feature is the detailed 100 page index in which I did not find any major errors. References are useful and up to date.

Reflecting USA practice, histology is not considered and whilst there are a few electronmicrographs the technique of electron-microscopy is not dealt with in any depth. The emphasis in microbiology (99 pages for bacteriology, 33 for mycology, 74 for