Book reviews

Lung Cancer. Clinical Diagnosis and Treatment. 2nd ed. Ed MJ Straus. (Pp 372; \$44.50.) Grune & Stratton Inc. 1982.

Attitudes to the treatment of lung cancer have changed dramatically since the first edition of this book in 1977. The contributors to this volume include many whose work has been of major importance in defining current knowledge. It is therefore a disappointment that much of the text is confused, outdated, and in parts inaccurate.

On the positive side, there are concise chapters on the morphology and ultrastructure of lung tumours, an excellent review of the cytopathologic diagnosis and clear descriptions of the staging and surgical treatment. The chapter on radiotherapy is very comprehensive.

A chapter on the growth characteristics of lung cancer is barely intelligible to the general reader, for whom such a book is presumably intended. The review of marker substances fails to transmit the interest which continues in this field. The use of "recent" referring to work published ten years ago, exemplifies the need to have provided more current information. An attempt to provide a fresh approach to the description of the symptoms and signs finds a discussion of the small print occurring before the major facts, a mistake not condoned in a student.

The organisation of the section on treatment is poor. Surgery remains the treatment of first choice for most forms of lung cancer; this chapter should precede that on radiotherapy. Drug treatment is a field in which the details of treatment are so variable it would seem more appropriate to set out the principles guiding treatment selection. None emerge from this presentation.

Despite some good sections this book is unsuitable for the general reader.

PFM WRIGLEY

Tumors of the Peripheral Nervous System—Supplement. RJ Reed and JC Harkin. (Pp 52; paperback \$4.25.) Armed Forces Institute of Pathology.

This is written by the same authors as the fascicle on tumours of the peripheral nerv-

ous system and cannot be understood without it. It covers some exceptionally rare neoplasms, some only described by the authors themselves. It suffers from the same difficulties as the fascicle in that the authors use their own terminology. They do define their terms but one does have to keep referring back. They use the term "mesenchyme" partly in a similar way we would use "mesoderm", but "malignant neuromesenchymoma" and "neurotropic melanoma" are hard to understand. They are very dogmatic about neural crest derivatives, a subject which is somewhat controversial.

However if one can accept terminology it is a useful account of neoplasms which the pathologist sees only rarely.

BARBARA F SMITH

Diagnostic Electron Microscopy. Vol 4. Ed Benjamin F Trump and Raymond T Jones. (Pp 554; £61.75.) John Wiley & Sons Limited. 1983.

This is the final volume of an already well-known series in which extensive reviews of topics in ultrastructural pathology are presented. This volume deals with a wide range of subject matter, including diagnostic virology; tumours of the head and neck; bone, breast, and heart pathology; and non-neoplastic conditions of lung. In addition there is an outstanding section on cytology and EM, and a brief but fascinating chapter on the analysis of urinary stones by EM-related techniques. In a book as good as this it would be invidious to select chapters for special approbation. In all cases the authors have succeeded in presenting their material from a practical viewpoint, making this a particularly useful bench book. The illustrations are all excellent and the chapters are well-referenced. This is a worthy conclusion to an outstanding series which has combined academic excellence with practical usefulness. It can be strongly recommended.

PG TONER

Connective Tissue Diseases. International Academy of Pathology Monograph. Ed Bernard M Wagner, Raul Fleischmajer and Nathan Kaufman. (Pp 220; £26.) Williams & Wilkins. 1983.

The term "connective tissue diseases" is used to describe a heterogeneous collection of disorders ranging from hereditary abnormalities of collagen to conditions such as systemic lupus erythematosus in which the primary defect is not of connective tissue itself but in which connective tissue may be the site of pathological changes. Many of the latter group are now considered to have an immunological basis and with the exception of scleroderma they are not considered in any detail in this monograph. The major value of this book is that it provides a concise account of recently acquired knowledge of connective tissue constituents. The structure, function, and distribution of different collagen sub-types, basement membrane components, and non-collagenous proteins such as fibronectin are reviewed, and ways in which these may be altered in disease are considered. Other chapters of value include an update on amyloidosis and a comprehensive discussion of the methods available for studying complex carbohydrates by light and electron microscopy. This book will be of general interest to anyone wishing to learn of recent advances in the rapidly expanding field of connective tissue pathology.

JOD MCGEE

Receptors in Health and Disease. Clinics in Endocrinology and Metabolism. Vol 12, No 1. Guest ed Richard N Clayton. (Pp 260; £11.75.) WB Saunders Company Ltd. 1983.

Like most in this series this volume is good value for money, particularly if you view the world through receptor-coloured spectacles. It is well-produced, with numerous clear diagrams, and it has 13 chapters by different authors on topics varying from adrenergic receptors to low density lipoprotein receptors. Obviously a book such as this cannot be comprehensive, but most of the areas where diseases are known to be linked to receptor abnormalities are covered. The chapters vary in their approach. Two are notably successful: the introductory chapter provides a very useful survey of current views on polypeptide hormone receptor structure and function, and the chapter on acetylcholine receptors and myasthenia gravis is clear and informative. In some the authors seem to be straining to regard every disease as receptor mediated—including thyroid cancer and