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 It is therefore a disappointment that much of the text is confused, outdated, and in parts inaccurate.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

de Quervain's thyroiditis—in others, the title might more appropriately have been “recent advances in endocrinology” rather than “receptors”. Overall the majority of contributions are useful reviews with extensive references lists. If you are not a “receptor buff” this is a useful volume to consult; if your work binds you to the receptor—you had better get internalised into this book!

ED WILLIAMS

Arsenic. Environmental Health Criteria 18. (Pp 174; paperback Sw fr 20.) World Health Organisation 1981.

For a reviewer to procrastinate over an opinion on any book referred to him is inexcusable, above all in the eyes of the editor. Critics of readable novels should seldom be daunted. By contrast when it comes to forming an opinion about a toxicological monograph like this one on Arsenic it is well-nigh impossible to sit back and read from page 1 to page 174 and still retain one's alertness and sense of judgement. Instead, appraisal on behalf of others is possible only by keeping the book beside one as a constant source of reference and seeing how it fares in this capacity. On this count the present volume, issued as one among a series of Environmental Health Criteria by the World Health Organisation, is to be strongly recommended. It serves as an invaluable collection of relevant facts within a conveniently small compass. Indeed, if there is any quibble at all, it is to question whether there is any reason for adopting in it the prose style at all. A series of Tables and diagrams might have served the purpose equally well.

At all events, for anyone faced with a problem of poisoning from arsenic, this is the text to which he can always profitably turn in the first instance—as indeed are others in this series for their respective topics.

ROY GOULDING

Fine Structure of Synovial Joints. A text and Atlas of the Ultrastructure of Normal and Pathological Articular Tissues. Feroze N Ghadially. (Pp 333; £45.) Butterworths. 1983.

In this beautifully illustrated atlas, Feroze Ghadially has collected together 226 electron micrographs from his published books and papers, added to them 123 further photographs and a text of 148 pages, and examined present knowledge of normal, and of some aspects of abnormal, synovial joints.

The result is a highly personal account of some of the most important topics of current interest to pathologists and to rheumatologists and orthopaedic surgeons. Torn menisci, intra-articular haemorrhage, villonodular synovitis, lipoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, cartilage injuries and defects, and ganglion are the subjects reviewed and illustrated after three introductory chapters that analyse the nature and significance of the fine structure of synovium and cartilage in considerable detail. Waving his verbal whip with relish, Ghadially flagellates those with whose views he does not happen to agree. In the field of research that seeks to determine the true structure of load-bearing cartilage, I have become one of the objects of this corrective exercise; it has proved an interesting experience and, since criticism is one of the strongest spurs to new investigation, has frequently led to a strengthening of the evidence against which Feroze Ghadially enjoys inveighing.

Although the price of this new volume is high, it is not excessive. All concerned with the diseases of joints and connective tissue should lose no time in gaining access to a copy.

DL GARDNER

Intercellular Communication in Leucocyte Function. Proceedings of the 15th International Leucocyte Culture Conference, California, December 1982. Ed JW Parker and RL O'Brien. (Pp 684; £21.50.) John Wiley & Sons. 1983.

The subject matter of the 15th International Leucocyte Culture Conference embraced a vast field of knowledge including growth factors, the stimulators and suppressors of lymphocyte and macrophage function, and hence the almost infinite diversity of effects which can be recorded in any complex system of interacting units. Useful perhaps to those in the field anxious not to overlook a significant piece of work; others would do better to keep up to date through the regular journals and reviews.

HEM KAY

Hepatocellular Carcinoma. A series of Workshops on the Biology of Human Cancer. Report No 17. UICC Technical Report Series Vol 74. Ed K Ocuda and H Mackay. (Pp 204; Sw fr 44.) UICC Geneva. 1982.

Literary efforts continue to pour out on the subject of liver disease and for good reason: significant advances continue to be made on hepatitis, autoimmunity, and carcinogenesis at a steady rate. This volume is one of an excellent series by the International Union Against Cancer that deals with specific aspects of tumours in man. It covers the epidemiology and pathology of liver cancer as well as experimental work on carcinogenesis, the role of the hepatitis B virus and other putative agents, tumour markers, host-tumour interactions, and ends with a useful set of recommendations for future studies. The report is aimed at those interested in this particular field but it can be recommended to anyone who wishes to update his knowledge on general tumour biology, chemical and viral oncogenesis: what is being learned is applicable to the whole of human cancer studies and is well worth being acquainted with. Moreover, this update is a model of its kind: it is concise, lucidly written, and well referenced.

PP ANTON

Some new titles

The receipt of books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits.

Multiple Choice Questions in Pathology with Answers and Explanatory Comments. IL Brown. (Pp 61; paperback £1.95.) Edward Arnold. 1983.

1983 Year Book of Drug Therapy. Ed J Hollister. (Pp 428; £32.) Blackwells. 1983.

Clinical Guide to Laboratory Tests. Ed NW Tietz. (Pp 695; softback £19.25.) WB Saunders Company. 1983.

Protective Agents in Cancer. Ed DH McBrien and TF Slater. (Pp 309; £18.) Academic Press. 1983.

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