Book reviews

described in the 28 chapters of this volume and it will be found in use to be a reliable guide.

Unquestionably the two volumes of the 7th edition here reviewed are well up to the standards set by their predecessors, and may stand up even better to highly specialised scrutiny. Topley and Wilson remains a necessity and one of the good things of life.

JW HOWIE


This is an attractively produced book which covers all the important aspects of clinical enzymology. The first part of the volume gives a brief and lucid account of enzyme action and the general principles of enzyme assays together with a simple treatment of enzyme kinetics. The rationale for enzyme determinations in the blood are also considered. The remaining chapters discuss individual enzymes, each being introduced by a short methodological section with subsequent fuller consideration of the clinical significance of their determination. Though this volume does not provide an in depth treatment of these enzymes, the material presented is adequate for comprehensive understanding of their clinical role and the writing is clear. It is unfortunate that there are numerous minor textual errors and that the names of so many enzymologists who have contributed to diagnostic enzymology and who are listed in the comprehensive reference section should have been mis-spelt.

Overall, it is a work that can be recommended for those who require a simple, brief introduction to the subject, and who are involved in the clinical interpretation of enzyme test values.

SB ROSALKI


The Falk Foundation sponsors excellent meetings on liver disease and related topics; this volume records the contributions to a Basel symposium of October 1982. The book is well produced, although failure to unify terminology between chapters, especially in the figures, is sometimes confusing—and what about “The audience then contributed thoughtful comments and penetrating questions until the moderator was reluctantly forced to terminate the session”!

The 40 or so chapters are up to date and generally of high quality. They cover hepatic metabolism of lipids, amino acids, proteins, carbohydrates, haem compounds, and certain metals and vitamins in health and disease, with sections on some related metabolic disorders: the volume title is inaccurate. The value of much full symposium publication can be questioned, and most of these contents can be found in standard textbooks or are already otherwise published. However, this book will be of use and interest to most chemical pathologists, and to other pathologists with an academic or service bias towards hepatology.

DN BARON


This excellent book is the report of a Beecham Colloquium which was held in September 1982. Despite its fairly long gestation period, it is packed with information and presents a nicely balanced mixture of clinical and molecular aspects of antiviral therapy. The writing is clear and even—a tribute no doubt to the editors, Sir Charles Stuart-Harris and Dr John Oxford. The editors are also to be congratulated on the transcripts of the discussions which followed the formal presentations. The contributors include most of the British experts on the subjects together with some of the leading American and European workers. Sir Charles’ introduction includes an “apology for the slow progress” and, unfortunately, even now in early 1984, the practical uses of antiviral therapy are still very limited. Nevertheless, there is real hope for the future. Among the most notable contributions is HP Lambert’s essay on target diseases in which he sets out the possible strategies for controlling virus infections.

The average medical reader may find AG Porter’s chapter on gene cloning and the molecular biology of interferon somewhat too biochemical but it is nevertheless a scholarly review of a currently exciting topic. This chapter is nicely complemented by GM Scott’s following article on the clinical uses of interferon. Although most current and prospective antiviral drugs are discussed, one surprising omission is ribivirin, which is scarcely mentioned. However, despite this minor criticism I found this an enjoyable and useful book which clinical virologists—and possibly also infectious diseases clinicians—will certainly want to have on their book shelves.

MORAG C TIMBURY


In this book the author’s expressed aim is to illustrate common problems in gastrointestinal pathology so that it may act as a bench reference for the reporting pathologist. A total of 370 illustrations are presented, mostly photomicrographs, and nearly all in colour. Many are excellent but