

Letters to the Editor

these patients and that it increases with weight gain.

In conclusion, Eckfeldt and Freier have raised an interesting theoretical point regarding the low creatinine clearance in patients with anorexia nervosa. Our patients were, however, not ketotic and therefore Eckfeldt's and Freier's objection is not directly relevant. Furthermore, we are all too aware of the fallacies of basing indices of renal function on creatinine clearance,⁶ and have taken care to show that the true glomerular filtration rate based on clearance of edetic acid labelled with ⁵¹chromium is also diminished in these patients.

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to Professor Spencer and St Thomas's Hospital. It will be attractive to anyone interested in pulmonary pathology, and should be on the shelves of every hospital library. Whether individual pathologists can afford to pay £125 for a fourth edition when they already have the third is a moot point and will depend on their pulmonophilia.

When I reviewed the third edition I was irritated by the provision of an index in only one volume of a two volume set. This problem has not been rectified in the fourth edition. Perhaps publishers do not read book reviews or perhaps they are too eager to maximise their profits regardless of criticism. Ignore this defect and persuade your library to buy a copy, but if you become annoyed as I do by publishers' parsimony, write an irascible complaining letter to Pergamon Press, so that you irritate them as well. If they have to answer your letter it will cost them money!

G SLAVIN

Electron Microscopy in Human Medicine. Vol 11 (a). The Skin. Ed JV Johannessen and K Hashimoto. (Pp 343; £57.50.) McGraw-Hill. 1985.

This is the penultimate book in this massive 12 volume series (for some curious reason the last two volumes are to be called 11 (a) and 11 (b) rather than 11 and 12), the format being the same as the earlier volumes. Professor Hashimoto is the editor of this volume and there are 11 other contributors, mainly from Japan and the United States. The material of the book consists of well illustrated ultrastructural descriptions of skin pathology under the headings of neoplastic conditions; bullous dermatoses; hereditary ichthyoses; hair abnormalities; and viral infections, together with a chapter on the freeze-fracture technique as applied to the skin. No doubt, any institution that has already collected the previous volumes will want to add this one to the set and it will be a valuable reference work for pathologists interested in dermatology. What is missing, however, is a clear indication as to the conditions for which electron microscopy is likely to be diagnostically useful and which ultrastructural features are simply of academic interest.

JULIE CROW

Laboratory Manual of Histochemistry. Linda L Vacca. (Pp 596; \$34.) Raven Press. 1984.

This is traditional histological technique in

modern guise. Loose leaved, spiral bound, the manual is set in typescript of differing styles and pitch that change haphazardly within the same section or the same page. The illustrations are restricted to line diagrams and a few photographs that lack lustre. Some may feel the title to be pretentious; only one tenth of this book is concerned with enzyme histochemistry, and immunohistochemistry is briefly described in 23 pages. The rest of this book is a manual on tissue preparation, section cutting, and dye staining. Lillie and Puchtler influenced the work of the author and their papers dominate the bibliography.

Overall, this manual is comprehensive and seems to be useful and reliable, but its success on this side of the Atlantic will depend on its ability to rise above the lecture note presentation and suspect staying power in laboratory use.

RAB DRURY

Arthritis and Allied Conditions. Daniel J McCarty. 10th ed. (Pp 1773; US \$121.00.) Lea & Febiger. 1985.

This new edition to one of the best and most well known major rheumatology textbooks is published six years after its predecessor. Its length, over 1700 pages, permits a comprehensive review of virtually all rheumatological conditions. There are 104 chapters written by over 100 contributors who comprise the best of North American rheumatologists. Unfortunately, the absence of any British, or indeed European contributors, gives a rather too severe American flavour. By any standards, however, this is an excellent synopsis of rheumatic diseases.

The book is well indexed and contains key references within the text. Its outline is similar to the previous edition. It comprises an introductory section on the epidemiology and differential diagnosis of arthritis; a relatively detailed account of some of the scientific pillars of current rheumatological thought; a brief resume on antirheumatic drugs; and then sections on the major rheumatic diseases. The book concentrates on clinical aspects rather than giving detailed accounts of laboratory techniques. For the practising pathologist it will provide an ever ready source of clinical information to place in the context of pathological findings.

It is a book to dip into rather than read exhaustively. I found it simple to review rapidly diverse subjects: for example, can

Book reviews

Pathology of the Lung. Vols 1 and 2. 4th ed. H Spencer. (Pp 1176; £125.) Pergamon Press. 1984.

Fourth editions of text books require little reviewing. Pathology of the Lung is a well known and respected book that is a credit