

ing with conventional methods, gives an excellent account of the application of solid phase radioimmunoassay and ELISA for the detection of *Legionella* antigens. The techniques for the detection of *Candida* and *Aspergillus* antigens in clinical material are well reviewed. The book also includes an adequate review of the well worn methods available for the diagnosis of hepatitis B infection together with a short and not always accurate section on the diagnosis of non-A and non-B hepatitis. Viruses associated with gastro-enteritis are allowed a brief account of ELISA and radioimmunoassay techniques but nowhere in this book does the electron microscope get a mention, either under this heading or in the chapter on microscopy. The last part of the book has short discussions of the applications and shortcomings of the *Limulus* lysate assay and the use of the gas liquid chromatograph; it also includes mention of automated methods for routine urine examination.

This book suffers from multiple authors combined with a lack of overall editing. It will provide a useful introduction and source of references for those entirely unfamiliar with the techniques described, but the established laboratory worker is unlikely to find it particularly rewarding. Although it is claimed in the preface that the book is a critical review, that particular element seems largely to be absent.

DM JONES

**Medical Laboratory Haematology.** R Hall and RG Malia. (Pp 669; £37.50.) Butterworths. 1984.

Medical Laboratory Haematology, as the title implies, is intended for laboratory workers and not for clinicians. The emphasis is therefore on the physiology and pathophysiology of blood disorders rather than on the clinical and therapeutic aspects. Practical details are also given of the commonest investigations.

Somewhat surprisingly blood group serology is excluded but this may reflect the separation of transfusion in the special examinations of the IMLS. I imagine that the book is primarily intended for candidates of the Haematology Special Examination but there is still much that will be of use to medical staff in training. Each chapter is well referenced though there must have been some delay in publication since the articles cited seem to stop fairly abruptly in 1981 with only a handful from 1982.

It is a significant achievement for two authors to have produced such a large and detailed treatise and there can be no doubt that it will be widely used.

JM ENGLAND

**Viral Heart Disease.** Ed H-D Bolte. (Pp 248; DM 78; US \$29.10.) Springer. 1984.

This well produced book is the report of a workshop held in January 1983 at Munich. The 26 papers are grouped into 3 "chapters" entitled histopathology and virology, clinical virology and cellular immunology, and haemodynamics and therapeutic aspects. This grouping is, however, very arbitrary with, for example, papers on diagnostic histopathology appearing in the first and last chapters.

The book has two main themes, acute viral myocarditis and dilated cardiomyopathy. The relationship between these two is explored and the studies presented point to a possible progression from viral myocarditis to dilated cardiomyopathy. This is not thought to be a direct result of viral damage to myocytes but is associated with a depression of suppressor T cell function. The suggestion is made in one paper that this altered T cell activity may be related to certain HLA types. In this latter paper as in most of the others the number of cases studied is small so that the conclusions have to be tentative.

This book is to be recommended for those who are interested in the problems of biopsy diagnosis of myocarditis, in the serological investigation of myocarditic and congestive myopathic patients, and in the clinical distinction between these two conditions.

PGI STOVIN

**Practical Haematology.** 6th ed. Sir John V Dacie and SM Lewis. (Pp 453; £15.) Churchill Livingstone. 1984.

As in previous editions, the authors describe the laboratory procedures in haematology, currently used and taught at Hammersmith Hospital and the Royal Postgraduate Medical School in London. While the structure of the book has remained essentially the same as in the 5th edition, the text has been thoroughly revised and brought up to date. In particular, sections have been expanded on quality

assurance and standardisation, the application of cytochemistry to the differential diagnosis of leukaemias, and the investigation of haemostatic failure.

Although I would personally like to see some section of the book presented in greater depth, for example that on the preparation of blood components in a hospital blood bank, I must admit that the authors and their collaborators carefully selected for presentation in detail all the methods generally used. The methods of interest to a minority of laboratory haematologists are outlined in principle only.

The new edition of *Practical Haematology* is printed as a paperback, with two columns of text on a page. Bold headings, as well as an extensive index, help the reader to find easily the required information. The new edition, increased in size and with improved appearance, is an invaluable reference text worth possessing by every laboratory haematologist.

B BROZOVIC

**Antinuclear Antibodies.** Contemporary Techniques and Clinical Application of Connective Tissue Diseases. Gale McCarty, Donald W Valencia, and Marvin J Fritzler. (Pp 95; £25.) Oxford University Press. 1984.

This is a short monograph on anti-nuclear antibodies. There have been many recent advances in the study of nuclear antigens and auto-antibodies which react with them in connective tissue diseases, and clinicians and laboratory workers will need to be kept up to date on progress. The text covers the main areas of work in this field. This includes the types of antibodies which are currently recognised and the methods of their detection. It gives details on both indirect immunofluorescence and counter immunoelectrophoresis. In addition to the methodological aspects the book provides a brief clinical resumé of the conditions which give rise to anti-nuclear antibodies. I found this an easily readable book and the text was lucid. Unfortunately there were areas where too much irrelevant technical detail was given; for example, detailed descriptions of how fluorescent microscopes should be set up, or a list of the diagnostic criteria for rheumatoid arthritis. It also misses out on a completely balanced approach. It did not describe all the methods which can be used to detect these antibodies, neither does it allude to the dif-