

Alcohol Related Diseases in Gastroenterology. Ed HK Seitz, B Kommerell. (Pp 423; DM 198;) Springer. 1985.

One's first thought on seeing this book is to question the need for yet another multi-author review on various aspects of alcoholism. On noting the list of contents and on reading through the book, however, it clearly does offer a useful addition to the library bookshelf. Several chapters directly and authoritatively address important current questions, such as γ -glutamyl transferase and other markers (Teschke), acetaldehyde toxicity (Salaspuro and Lindros), hepatic fibrogenesis (Hahn and Schuppan), carcinogenesis (Seitz), and Mallory bodies and the cytoskeleton (Denk). All reviews are reasonably up to date and are well balanced, although the chapter on porphyrin metabolism does perpetuate the urocosynthase confusion in haem biosynthesis. The identity and role of hydroxymethyl balance synthetase is well established. Some comments on the newer HPLC techniques for the detection and diagnosis of the various porphyrias would have been useful. A very readable authoritative book, worthy of its dedicatee, Charles Lieber, and a strongly recommended purchase for one's own or communal library.

TJ PETERS

Liver and Biliary Disease. Pathophysiology, Diagnosis, Management. 2nd ed. R Wright, GH Millward-Sadler, KGMM Alberti, S Karran. (Pp 1608; £69.50.) WB Saunders. 1985.

The second edition of this book looks much the same as the first, but the similarity ends with the colour of their binding: the new edition has been thoroughly brought up to date and that means the year of publication. Those interested in morphometry may like to know that it runs to 1608 pages and weighs 3725g; there are 89 contributors whose list reads like Who's Who in hepatology; there are hundreds of illustrations and thousands of references, both beyond count. The whole work is awe inspiring, and it is a feeble statement to make that the four editors are to be congratulated on their achievement. The book is broadly divided into two parts: pathophysiology (which includes all of the basic sciences) and diagnosis and management. The Southampton philosophy of an integrated approach is maintained throughout and there is no part of the book that, for instance, would be of no interest to a pathologist. Dr Millward-Sadler has moved up to second place in the ranking

order of editors, which reflects a further improvement in what already was an extensive cover of morphology. The paper is better, the illustrations are crisper; there are numerous tables, diagrams, and charts. The single colour plate illustrating endoscopy findings is something of a lip service paid to our polychrome inner milieu but one appreciates the financial reasons. This clearly is a major reference work that all libraries and anyone interested in liver disease must have. The cost, moreover, is reasonable by today's standards.

PP ANTHONY

An Introduction to Inherited Metabolic Diseases. JB Holton. (Pp 99; £7.95.) Chapman and Hall. 1985.

This book is well titled. The objective of concisely and systematically explaining the principles entailed in inherited metabolic diseases has been achieved by a single author. In some ways the extent of this achievement can only be fully appreciated by those with a detailed knowledge of the problems. In fact, the examples and their manner of use could confuse beginners. This is a text for an undergraduate lecture course. It is a book reflecting the evolution of the concepts entailed in inherited metabolic diseases; "The most important single development in human biochemical genetics was the introduction of the concept of inborn errors of metabolism at the beginning of this century by Archibald Garrod, a London physician."

For workers in the laboratory or other forms of medicine seeking practical skills the further stages are charted in recommended further reading. I did feel, however, that some more guidance to bridging the gap between this introduction and detailed reviews would be helpful. Some detailed overall knowledge of commonly disturbed areas of metabolism is needed practically. The two great texts recommended are too large, although excellent for reference. Guidance to the more detailed advanced undergraduate texts might perhaps be usefully added.

I would recommend this book for cover to cover reading, especially by those clinical pathologists needing guidance on general principles and for whom biochemistry is only a hazy memory. With this book's help the more detailed reviews of specific areas necessary for clinical work should be more clearly absorbed and understood.

RA HARKNESS

Self-Assessment in Histological Techniques. JD Bancroft, BT Chalk. (Pp 214; soft cover £8.95.) Churchill Livingstone 1985.

This small paperback is primarily designed for medical laboratory scientific officers and histology laboratory staff. It is based on the material found in two important and widely used benchbooks by Bancroft and Stevens and Bancroft and Cook. It is set as a series of increasingly difficult true or false multiple choice and micrograph based problems.

Those questions which concern the scientific and practical basis of histological technique are excellent. The more basic questions should be answerable by primary MRCPath candidates and some of the more detailed ones should help a senior registrar prepare for his exam cut up. The questions directed towards pathology are of more dubious value for the medical trainee, if only because some of them are poorly worded.

Our medical laboratory scientific officers enjoyed and appreciated this book. It is certainly worth adding to any collection of books for preparation for the Institute exam. For the pathologist it is also worth a serious browse. It certainly highlighted worrying gaps in my understanding of histological technique.

S KNOWLES

Atlas of Skeletal Muscle Pathology. Current Histopathology Series. Vol 9. Janice Anderson. (Pp 168; £75.) MTP Press Limited. 1985.

This carefully compiled work conveys the up to date position of diagnostic muscle pathology. As volume 9 of the *Current histopathology* series it becomes a worthy but costly companion to existing volumes.

The book is well referenced chapter by chapter in a thoughtful way, which will allow access to detail in original and review articles. The text is adequate for an atlas, complementing clear illustrations. The sections on normal appearances, methods, and artefacts might be thought short by some but the weight of the book is in the illustrations of disordered muscle. The author illustrates the bones of all diseases with some good sets of serial sections of diagnostic areas. The only fault that can be mentioned is that some of the electron micrographs, which have been included to complete case material are not of specific or diagnostic phenomena.

Of most value to trainees in pathology with access to a muscle histology service that the clarity and order of the presentation will bring profit at any level.

D DOYLE