

simple anucleate red cell as a model for the complexity of the whole organism remains questionable: it would be remarkably convenient if the red cell life span in any one subject were a guide to his ultimate survival, but as pointed out by JM Rifkind and colleagues, although an 80 year old donor does not have 80 year old red cells, his red cells have been produced by an 80 year old erythropoietic system.

Proceedings of conferences tend to have a limited life span, and relatively few merit publication. This is a rare exception, a fascinating subject, with some excellent reviews as well as original data by eminent workers: recommended reading for all haematologists.

SM LEWIS

**Techniques in Immunocytochemistry.** Vol 3. Ed Gillian R Bullock, Peter Petrusz. (Pp 241; £37.50.) Academic Press Inc. 1985.

This book is the third volume in a series devoted to immunocytochemistry techniques. There are some very useful contributions: the discussion of the effects of fixation on immunocytochemistry in chapter 1, although not applicable to much routine immunocytochemistry, should be studied carefully by all immunocytochemists when assessing a new antibody. Chapters on specific techniques, such as the APAAP immunoalkaline phosphatase method, immunoblotting, and microinjection are carefully written and allow the reader confidently to try these new methods out. The last three chapters on the use of metallic ions are particularly useful and I would highlight in particular, the chapter on the enzyme and gold technique, which, although not strictly immunocytochemistry, seems to open up whole new fields of study. This book should join its companion volumes in all immunocytochemistry laboratories.

PG ISAACSON

**Mucosal Biopsy of the Gastrointestinal Tract.** Vol 3 in the series Major Problems in Pathology. 3rd ed. R Whitehead. (Pp 320; £39.50.) Saunders. 1985.

The third edition of Professor Whitehead's book *Mucosal Biopsy of the Gastrointestinal Tract* appears six years after the second. The editions continue to improve. The third is now 320 pages long, some 80 pages longer than its predecessor. The biggest change is the welcome inclusion of a section devoted to the oesophagus which covers the first 30 pages. Another newcomer is the ileal biopsy,

although with only a small "walk on part" of one page.

The format of this edition is similar to the second, although it is larger and produced with more pleasing page quality and type set. As the photomicrographs were of such good quality it is not surprising that most have been retained with a few changes, and some gaps have been plugged; presumably, as the rarer conditions finally present in the Flinders catchment area. Thus in this edition biopsy photographs of Waldenstrom's macroglobulinaemia and A-beta-lipoproteinaemia are included. As one would expect the background discussion to many of the sections has been improved, expanded, and brought up to date, as have the selection of excellent references.

The book has always been one of the best for the diagnostic pathologist coping with gastrointestinal material, and the third edition preserves and improves its reputation. Such is the pace of gastrointestinal research that there are already topics lining up for the fourth edition, such as *Campylobacter pyloridis* and coeliac T cell lymphomas.

AB PRICE

**Muir's Textbook of Pathology.** 12th ed. Ed JR Anderson. (£29.50.) Edward Arnold. 1985.

Sixty one years have passed since the appearance of the first edition of "Muir." It is a pleasure to be able to report that this old friend, now in its twelfth edition, is not only alive but flourishing under the sympathetic guidance of Professor John Anderson.

With the rapid expansion of knowledge, not least in the fields of immunology and molecular biology, the editor has increased the number of contributors; the degree of uniformity of style and presentation is a tribute to his editorial skills. There has also been a very considerable and, in my view, welcome increase in the use of diagrams to illustrate both factual data and conceptual material. At the same time the standard of reproduction of the many photographs is high, many of them showing a degree of crispness and clarity that is very pleasing. The improvements both in the text and in presentation have been accompanied by an increase in bulk (and, alas, in price), and the very wide range of knowledge encompassed in this book has resulted in extensive cross referencing which can be a little tedious for the reader. These are trifling criticisms, however, and this new edition can be strongly recommended both to undergraduates and to pathologists in training. It is a credit to its editor, contributors, and publishers.

NEVILLE WOOLF

**The Logic of Laboratory Medicine.** Principles for Use of the Clinical Laboratory. Dennis A Noe. (Pp 373; paperback £19.95.) Pitman Publishing Ltd. 1985.

This is an unusual textbook of pathology. The author opens with a discussion of units and standardised presentation of data and moves on to the sources of variation in laboratory measurements. There is a full presentation of the evaluation of test performance in terms of diagnostic efficiency as well as the use of multivariate analyses including discriminant functions and Bayesian analysis. The author then discusses the disturbance of physiological systems by disease and how a structure of appropriate investigation can be built. The mathematical approach to diagnosis based on laboratory investigation is well presented, but a student reading the book may not appreciate the limited practicability of such techniques at present, because most of the tests we use have low specificity. Nevertheless, a knowledge of the principles would benefit medical students and trainees studying for higher qualifications in pathology. There are short chapters on morphological diagnosis, the use of some aspects of medical microbiology, and therapeutic drug monitoring. These tend to upset the balance of the book. One of the most apt quotations heading the chapters is from David Hume: "all knowledge resolves itself into probability."

MG RINSLER

**Atlas of Oral Pathology.** Current Histopathology. Vol 8. RB Lucas, JW Eveson. (Pp 152; £75.) MTP Press Limited. 1985.

The slim volume of 152 pages is aimed at the general diagnostic pathologist with the hope that it will serve as a bench book. In eleven chapters it covers the oral tissues, including bone and salivary glands with colour illustrations of high quality. These are accompanied by a succinct text, which, for the most part, presents a sound account of oral pathology, although in a number of areas this is not fully up to date. This is also reflected in the brief lists of references which follow each chapter.

The longest chapter is the one covering non-odontogenic tumours and includes an unhappy mixture of neoplastic and non-neoplastic swellings. This is the poorest part of the book including several conditions which might have been better placed in other chapters. There is an adequate index.

The authors have very largely achieved their aims in writing this volume, but at