Essentials of Medical Mycology. E Glyn V Evans, James C Gentles. (Pp 195; soft cover £14.95.) Churchill Livingstone. 1985. ISBN 0 443 02505 3.

This is a simple and well constructed handbook, outlining in 23 short chapters the essence and practice of medical mycology, the better to inform those for whom this is not a specialist interest. It provides basic information on the characteristics, distribution, diagnosis, and treatment of the superficial, subcutaneous, and systemic mycoses in a readable and abbreviated form that should serve students and laboratory workers well. Methods are described in the appendix, and the glossary of terms should prove particularly useful. The bibliography is selected, directing the reader to major and substantial texts.

The book has been produced to high standard and the illustrations chosen with care. This is a good buy for the price.

ROSALINDE HURLEY

Age-Related Factors in Carcinogenesis. IARC Scientific Publications No 58. Ed A Likhachev, V Anisimov, R Montesano. (Pp 288; £20.) Oxford University Press. 1986. ISBN 92 832 1158 8.

The published proceedings of a symposium, especially an international symposium, are usually a fairly effective hypnotic. They tend to function as a souvenir for those who attended the meeting rather than as a useful source of information for those who did not, and are often no more than a dressed up book of abstracts in distractingly different typetypes.

This example is different. It is the 58th in a series of publications by the International Agency for Research on Cancer and is a well produced and tidily edited book. It records the scientific presentations at a meeting held over two years ago where scientists from Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, and Japan assembled a multidisciplinary farrago of various aspects of cancer and aging. There is a strong bias towards Russian authors because the meeting was held in Leningrad and hosted by the NN Petrov Research Institute of Oncology. It must be admitted that some of the papers are a little turgid. None the less, any medical scientist interested in the topic should find several of the 23 adequately referenced monographs of value, and there are one or

two which might also entertain the less committed reader.

The prize has to go to Richard Peto from Oxford. In a volume called *Age-Related Factors in Carcinogenesis* he begins his contribution by saying: "There is no such thing as ageing and cancer is not related to it." He also makes some interesting observations. Borrow the book from your library and see.

JS LILLEYMAN

Clinical Chemical Pathology. 10th ed. CH Gray, PJN Howorth, MG Rinsler. (Pp 326; soft cover £8.50.) Edward Arnold. 1985. ISBN 0-7131-4487-4.

Many years ago when I was a houseman the senior author of this book regularly queried the value of tests which I had requested. That same practical approach is still evident in this new edition of *Clinical Chemical Pathology*.

Twenty two years after the first edition the book has grown thicker but it is a solid updated review of modern chemical pathology. The text ranges from succinct descriptions of cloned gene linkages, lipoproteins, and immunoglobulins to practical descriptions of current dynamic function tests. There is, however, some unevenness. In depth descriptions are given of many topics but, for example, no mention is made of the sensitivity or specificity of tests, and the metabolic changes due to vomiting could be dealt with in more detail; 3α , 20β -pregnanediol was suspected of causing breast milk jaundice—not the improbable steroid stated on page 234. These are minor criticisms, and I thoroughly recommend this book, especially for primary MRCPath candidates in chemical pathology, and also for their senior colleagues.

T HARGREAVES

Plasma Fibronectin: Structure and Function. Haematology Series. Vol 5. Ed J McDonagh. (Pp 288; \$71.50.) Marcel Dekker Inc. 1985. ISBN 0-8247-7384-5.

The plasma protein fibronectin was first described in the 1940's, but medical scientists paid it scant attention, until it was

purified and chemically characterised in the 1970's. Our understanding of its biological role has since grown rapidly, and now in the 1980's it is accepted as an important protein in haemostasis: it is seen as a kind of "biological superglue."

Published work on fibronectin is scattered over a wide range of scientific journals, and Dr Jan McDonagh and her expert coauthors have done a great service to the haemostasis community by bringing together such a comprehensive collection of information on the protein within the covers of relatively short publications. It is a complicated and wide ranging topic, but the authors have succeeded in producing a very readable text and a very valuable resume of the subject. Departments of haematology and biological sciences will find it a useful addition to their libraries and haemostasis research groups will require it in their laboratories.

The first family with a congenital deficiency of fibronectin has been described since the book was published. This will encourage clinically orientated haemostasis research groups to take more interest in the protein.

JF DAVIDSON

Monoclonal Antibodies for Cancer Detection. Ed RW Baldwin, Vera S Byers. (Pp 195; paperback £29.00; hardback £56.50.) Academic Press. 1985. ISBN 0-12-077020-2 (hardback); ISBN 0-12-077021-2 (paperback).

Monoclonal Antibodies and Cancer Therapy. UCLA Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology New Series. Vol 27. Ed RA Reisfeld, S Sell. (Pp 632; £60.) Alan R Liss. 1985. ISBN 0-8451-2626-1.

These two volumes are complementary to each other in providing a comprehensive background to the current status of monoclonal antibodies and their relevance to cancer research.

Baldwin and Byers have produced an 18 chapter, 393 page, multiauthor, well illustrated monograph, with emphasis on the production of monoclonal antibodies to specific antigens and their potential use for localising and treating cancer. Great attention is given to the limitations of the techniques used, and these are particularly useful reviews of developments in antibody imaging and immunoscintigraphy in relation to computed tomography scanning. Attention is focused on methods of conjugation