electron microscopy, and of tissue culture in the study of selected tumours. Only the purist will quibble with the inclusion of the histiocytoses in a volume on neoplasia. The chapter on histiocytosis X provides a clear and balanced account of the pathology and cytology of the condition with helpful guidance on differential diagnosis and prognosis. By contrast, the review of lymphohistiocytosis is disappointing, mainly because of the format which consists largely of a comparison, organ by organ, of the distribution of infiltration in this condition and in fatal Letterer-Siwe disease. The contributions on the leukaemias and osteosarcoma of childhood are excellent, clearly written, and informative. The claims for the role of electron microscopy in tumour diagnosis are fairly presented; the emphasis is mainly on the "small round cell" group of tumours and correlation with other diagnostic methods such as immunohistochemistry is advised. The review of tissue culture points to contributions in the field of tumour biology and regulation of tumour cell growth. This is a well produced and beautifully illustrated volume and a welcome addition to this series, which deserves to be better known in the UK than it is. Unfortunately, the price does not help in this respect.

AAM GIBSON

Gastric Carcinoma. Current Problems in Tumour Pathology. Ed. MI Filipe, JR Jass. (Pp 297; £40.) Churchill Livingstone. 1986. ISBN 0-443-03166-5.

The identification of high risk groups with consequent diagnosis at an early stage represents perhaps the only realistic means of improving the prognosis of gastric carcinoma in this country at the present time. The pathologist has an important role to play in both these endeavours and this book provides wide ranging and important practical and theoretical information through which this role may be enhanced. Of particular value are the detailed accounts of techniques such as mucin histochemistry and DNA analysis which are beginning to supplement the time honoured histological methods, but it is apparent that much still needs to be done regarding the definition and terminology of precancerous lesions such as dysplasia and metaplasia. There are, nonetheless, most useful chapters dealing with pre-cancerous conditions in general, as well as early gastric cancer and the classification of gastric carcinoma. The question of cytology receives excellent coverage and it is encouraging to see this technique

acknowledged not just as an expensive luxury but as a routine procedure. Whilst many questions about gastric cancer plainly remain to be answered there is no doubt that this book will prove to be immensely helpful to both gastroenterologists and pathologists who have to face up to the problems presented by this formidable disease.

FD LEE

The Role of Cyclic Nucleic Acid Adducts in Carcinogenesis and Mutagenesis. Proceedings of an International Meeting held in Lyon, France (IARC No 70). Ed B Singer, H Bartsch. (Pp 467; £40.) Oxford University Press. 1986. ISBN 92-832-1170-7.

This volume contains the proceedings of an IARC sponsored meeting held in 1984. Like many symposium volumes its contents are thus dated to a certain degree. Unlike many, however, there is a useful degree of coherence in the topic addressed. The peer reviewed papers provide a non-specialist with an overview of an important topic in chemical carcinogenesis studies: the formation of exocyclic nucleic acid base adducts. The foreword claims that it is the first comprehensive overview of this subject. The late Tony Loveless and his colleagues at the Institute of Cancer Research provided much of the original stimulus for this type of work with their seminal studies of bifunctional alkylating agents and the role of nucleic acid base modifications in mutagenesis and carcinogenesis. It is now over 20 years since it was shown that cyclic nucleic acid adducts can be formed in the test tube by the reaction of purine and pyrimidine bases with bifunctional agents such as glyoxal. The essential reaction consists of the addition of a further ring system or systems to the heterocyclic bases. Some cyclic adducts may have miscoding properties with respect to transcription, others may cause faulty base pairing during replication and others may cause DNA cross linking. Not only is their mechanism of action potentially diverse but it is now clear that a wide variety of chemicals can react with nucleic acid bases in this manner, including several environmentally suspect agents (vinyl chloride). Most such reactions involve labile metabolic intermediates, and complex rearrangements to yield the final stable adducts. Much work has therefore been devoted to the identification of these reaction mechanisms. About three quarters of this volume consists of papers which explore the chemistry of cyclic adduct formation by vinyl halides, carbamate esters, haloalkylnitrosoureas, bifunctional aldehydes,

and aromatics. The biological relevance of many of these test tube reactions has, however, proved more difficult to establish. Not only may intact DNA and its associated proteins protect bases from specific chemical modifications that proceed readily *in vitro* but intermediates in cyclic adduct formation may be of greater genotoxic relevance than the final stable adducts; whether DNA repair enzymes can remove cyclic adducts is also uncertain. One approach to this problem is to identify and measure adducts in cells themselves. The final section of this book, which is regrettably short, is devoted to such methods, many of which still seem to be in their infancy. In short, therefore, this book contains much that will interest chemists, toxicologists and possibly epidemiologists. There is, however, little enlightenment for the biologist seeking a simple answer to the question of what in fact is the role of cyclic nucleic acid adducts in carcinogenesis. This it should be said is simply a reflection on the present state of knowledge.

MJ O'HARE

Separation of Human Blood and Bone Marrow Cells. FMK Ali. (Pp 248; paperback £17.75.) John Wright. 1986. ISBN 0-7236-0698-6.

This book is essentially a manual of techniques for the collection, separation, and identification of cell fractions and subtypes from peripheral blood and bone marrow. Its scope is comprehensive, including details of isolation of erythroid progenitors from cell culture systems as well as more standard techniques of leucocyte separation by density gradient centrifugation and adherence. The principles of the main methods are discussed at the beginning of each chapter.

Where the author has been particularly successful is in the wealth of practical information she provides, from supplies of materials, through fine technical and logistic details of the methods, to useful comments on the reproducibility and relative merits of each technique. The writing is clear and the layout readable, and the whole book is sensibly sized and priced, with more than 350 references.

For whom will this book be useful? While many techniques will fall outside the requirements of most haematology laboratories, centres undertaking bone marrow culture and immunological investigations will find it a valuable addition to their libraries. In particular, individuals just beginning

postgraduate research will appreciate the lucid explanations and the hundred and one practical hints for carrying out these often frustrating techniques.

LORNA M WILLIAMSON

Optimal Use of the Clinical Laboratory. 5th International Meeting on Clinical Laboratory Organization and Management. Ed O Zinder. (Pp 140; £34.90.) Karger. 1986. ISBN 3-8055-4328-X.

The papers published in this book are concerned with three strands of thought in the management of clinical laboratories; the effective use of resources, manipulation of the results produced to give added value, and decentralised laboratory testing.

The subject matter and discussion presented in most of the papers will be of interest to anyone working in a clinical laboratory, but the price is such that only libraries will be able to afford it.

MG RINSLER

Prevention and Control of Nosocomial Infections. Ed RP Wenzel. (Pp 641; £56.) Williams and Wilkins. 1987. ISBN 0-683-8923-4.

In the 1980 PHLS survey of 18 000 hospital patients in England and Wales, 9.2% had hospital acquired (nosocomial) infection. Similar figures exist for Europe and USA. These infections not only lengthen hospital stay but are a known cause of increased mortality. The recent outbreaks at Stanley Royd and Stafford Hospitals serve as grim reminders. Cost factors are also important, and in these days of financial stringencies hospital managers are looking to the microbiologist to introduce effective control programmes which can prevent up to one third of nosocomial infections. A book which can help us review, organise, and supervise infection control procedures must be welcome. Professor Wenzel has gathered 32 of his colleagues to produce a volume which provides "state of the art information". To a large extent he succeeds. They cover all the parameters of nosocomial infection both general and specific, including a chapter on "Using the literature"; unfortunately most of this is American and there are notable British omissions. Nonetheless this book is recommended reading for everyone concerned with hospital infection.

RC SPENCER

Current Haematology and Oncology. Vol. 5. Ed Virgil F Fairbanks. (Pp 308; £62.) Wolfe Medical Publications Limited. 1987 ISBN 0-8151-3342-1.

The title of this now annual publication from the United States again raises the interesting question whether haematology and oncology can be combined together as a single specialty. Traditionally on this side of the Atlantic the answer is no, but might now be argued to be yes if enough clinicians would find the entire contents of the book helpful in terms of their routine practice. On that basis we can conclude that haematology—or whatever it might be called—is very nearly a specialty. Only one chapter (progress in therapy of small cell lung cancer) would not be of direct relevance to jobbing haematologists in the United Kingdom.

The rest is right on target—acute and chronic leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma, oncogenes in haematologic malignancy, the plasma coagulation system, and transfusion medicine (another specialty?). Everything is within two standard deviations of day to day practice; final MRCPPath candidates please note.

The text is readable, authoritative, as up to date as a book can be, and well referenced. While some of the topics covered are so frequently reviewed they now perhaps need a review of reviews, others are not, and there is a useful comment on non-A, non-B hepatitis, for instance, and also a gentle introduction to proteins C and S for those who, (like me) vaguely wonder what they are from time to time. Recommended if the departmental budget will stretch to it. Even the chapter on lung cancer is quite interesting. Radio-oncologists beware.

JS LILLEYMAN

Notices

ACP Locum Bureau

The Association of Clinical Pathologists runs a locum bureau for consultant pathologists.

Applicants with the MRC Path who would like to do locums and anyone requiring a locum should contact Dr David Melcher, Histopathology Department, Sussex County Hospital, Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE.

"First Conference of the European Society for Chlamydia Research"

Bologna, Italy, May 30–June 1 1988

Main topics: Epidemiology and preventive measures of chlamydial infections (*C trachomatis*, *C psittaci*); Europe-biology-clinical manifestations and therapy-immunology and host-parasite interaction-diagnostic procedures-chlamydial genetics-vaccine development.

Please indicate interest in participation and preferred topic(s) by contacting: Roberto Cevenini, Institute of Microbiology of the University of Bologna, S Orsola University Hospital, 9 via Massarenti, 40138, Bologna, Italy.

Dermatopathology Self-Assessment Workshop

A dermatopathology self-assessment workshop will be held at Guy's Hospital, London, April 22 and 23 1988. The course is for both pathologists and dermatologists and will cover a broad range of subjects. Participants will have an opportunity to study 100 unknown slides during two microscope sessions, followed by a formal discussion.

For further information please contact: Marion Ellis, Secretary to Dr MacDonald, Dermatology Department, Guy's Hospital, St Thomas Street, London SE1 9RT.

This course is approved by the British Society of Dermatopathology.

British Journal of Haematology Research Trust Travelling Fellowships

Applications are invited from young haematologists of any discipline working in the United Kingdom for a travelling fellowship to allow them to attend a scientific meeting outside the United Kingdom which they consider to be important for their career development.

Applications will be considered half yearly and should be received by Professor A Jacobs, Department of Haematology, University of Wales College of Medicine, Heath Park, Cardiff CF44XW, not later than July 20 January 1 in each year.