

Book reviews

The Kidney. A Clinico-Pathological Study. 2nd ed. Priscilla Kincaid-Smith and Judith A Whitworth. (Pp 305; £65.) Blackwells. 1987. ISBN 0-632-01811-9.

This book, designed for the clinical nephrologist and specialist pathologist, has something for everyone with an interest in renal disease. As the title of the book implies, clinico-pathological correlations are the essence of the text. The importance of establishing a normal baseline for glomerular architecture is stressed in the comparison of postmortem appearances with cadaveric biopsies taken at the time of transplantation, and normal renal biopsies. The basic patterns of glomerular damage are defined and distinguished from superimposed lesions.

The chapters include a review of the relevant publications followed by "the Royal Melbourne experience" defining in detail both clinical and morphological features. Reference is made to the first edition so that this volume relates to the collective experience of some 12,000 biopsies. Detailed analysis shows how the presence or absence of superimposed lesions relate to prognosis in the various forms of glomerulonephritis. The wealth of material presented gives insight into the evolution of glomerular diseases, and the value of precise morphological characterisation in the context of repeated biopsies is emphasised.

Other major sections include a discussion of lesions involving glomeruli and blood vessels; tubulo-interstitial disorders; and end stage renal failure and renal transplantation. The book is well illustrated with both light and electron micrographs, but contains some inaccuracies in the cross referencing of some of the figures.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this excellent book, the text of which is well supplied with up to date references. *The kidney: a clinico-pathological study* is a must for those engaged in the routine interpretation of renal biopsies and the study of renal disease, and is also a useful addition to the library of those with more general interests.

JR SHORLAND

Biopsy Pathology in Colorectal Disease. IC Talbot, AB Price. Biopsy Pathology Series. (Pp 394; £48.50.) Chapman and Hall. 1987. ISBN 0-412-22160-8.

This is a good practical handbook on rectal

and colonic biopsies. The significance of histological observations and the diagnostic criteria for colorectal disease are clarified in the text and clearly illustrated in the photomicrographs. Helpful observations are made on the diagnosis of ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. The term "nuclear atypia" is preferred to that of "indefinite" in the classification of dysplasia and differentiation from the regenerative epithelial changes of inflammatory bowel disease. It is also pointed out that a villous appearance can be produced by the irregularity of healing causing confusion with a similar pattern in dysplasia. Pseudomembranous colitis, antibiotic associated colitis, and antibiotic associated diarrhoea are discussed with reference to the four toxins of *Clostridium difficile*. Iron laden histiocytes are not, unfortunately, a common or useful sign of ischaemia in the experience of the authors. There is an excellent review of polyps reinforced with guidance on the assessment of the malignant polyp. Sound advice is offered on the diagnosis of Hirschsprung's disease, hypoganglionosis, and neuronal dysplasia.

I confidently recommend this book as a valuable aid to diagnosis in the field of colorectal disease.

H THOMPSON

Platelet-Vessel Wall Interactions. The Bloomsbury Series in Clinical Science. Ed RM Pittilo, SJ Machin. Pp 198; £47.00.) Springer-Verlag. 1987. ISBN 3-540-17488-5.

This volume in the Bloomsbury Series in Clinical Science consists essentially of a series of articles in the general area of platelets and endothelial cells. The editors and individual authors are based at the Departments of Haematology and Histopathology at the Middlesex Hospital and the Institute of Urology at St Philip's Hospital. They are all experienced and active research workers in the field. The opening chapter consists of a comprehensive review of platelet structure and biochemistry which is nicely illustrated with line diagrams and electron micrographs. A histopathologist's view of the structure of the vascular endothelium follows and subsequently a discussion of aspects of the culture of endothelial cells. Experimental data on smoking and the vascular endothelium and on renal disease and the haemolytic uraemic syndrome are reviewed in later chapters. The volume finishes with a useful review of some of the pharmacological agents which may influence platelet vessel wall interactions. The individual sections are generally well present-

ted and well referenced. Areas which perhaps could have been usefully included in more detail are the relation of the skin bleeding time to platelet vessel wall interaction, some discussion on the sub types of von Willebrand's disease and the lessons to be learned therefrom with regard to platelet endothelial interaction and also the recent findings on the physics of blood flow and platelet vessel wall interaction.

This volume would be a useful addition to the library of basic and clinical scientists working in the area of platelets and endothelial cells and is of especial value to those interested in the study of associations between smoking and vascular disease and in the role of platelets in renal disorders.

M GREAVES

Blood, Blood Products and AIDS. Ed R Madhok, CD Forbes, BL Evatt. (Pp 230; £30.00.) Chapman & Hall. 1987. ISBN 0-4122-8360-3.

The occurrence of AIDS following blood transfusion provided the first clear evidence that a virus was the causative agent. Despite remarkable success in containing AIDS as a transfusion problem the association remains strong in the minds of both health-care professionals and the general public. This multiauthor book addresses very clearly a number of current issues linking the two topics. Particularly valuable are chapters reviewing the human retroviruses causing AIDS syndromes, detailed coverage of HIV infection, and its interaction with the immune system and T cell phenotyping. These are presented in an up to date form that will not otherwise be readily available to the general reader. A chapter is included covering the immunosuppressive effects of blood—a matter thrown into prominence by HIV infection but now becoming of far wider interest. As examples, transfusion and recurrence of neoplasia, transfusion prior to renal transplantation, and transfusion for recurrent abortion are covered. The cornerstone of containment of HIV infection from the transfusion viewpoint is, of course, the serological testing of donations. Despite the remarkable practical success of HIV antibody tests there remain numerous scientific challenges in the detection of HIV infected individuals. Any tendency for complacency will soon be dispelled by the chapter on serological testing.

This book might on first impression be considered to have been hastily conceived to capitalise on concern over the potential

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