

Book reviews

the question of exactly who the book is being aimed at, a question which is not addressed by the editor/author in the preface.

The longest chapters are those of greatest interest to pathologists and comprise 70 pages by JD Oriel (genitourinary physician) on infective conditions, 74 pages by C Marjorie Ridley (dermatologist) on skin conditions, and three chapters by Professor H Fox and C Hilary Buckley on tumours and tumour-like conditions. There are numerous illustrations and the standard of both clinical photographs and histological sections is very high. In particular, the many colour illustrations of skin conditions that affect this area are to be commended, although occasionally some imagination has to be used to translate the appearances from other skin areas, eg the axilla (Fig 6.18) or the scrotum (Fig 6.28A) to the vulva. The editor should also have detected the fact that the electron micrographs of HPV particles on p71 and p107 are in fact the same photograph in a different orientation, although the original owner has somehow managed not to get the result as well focused as the borrower has.

I would suggest that gynaecologists and gynaecological histopathologists will certainly find this a useful reference book for their shelves. It might also be found useful by STD clinicians and dermatologists.

JULIE CROW

The Basics of Technical Communicating. B Edward Cain. ACS Professional Reference Book Series. (Pp 198; \$35.95). American Chemical Society. 1988. ISBN 0-8412-1451-4.

This short book is intended to help American chemists become articulate and unambiguous in their day to day professional work. As the preface says, much of what it contains is equally pertinent to other professions including the medical sciences. Simple grammar, letter writing, construction of manuscripts, illustrations, proof reading, writing abstracts, and how to apply for a job are all covered. The author practices what he preaches in that the text is concise, clear, and easy to read.

There is no shortage of books on such topics and it is hard to see that Dr Cain's will find a unique place in medical circles this side of the Atlantic, particularly as some of the advice (construction of resumes [CVs], for example) is parochial. But any attempt to improve the standard of scientific writing is to be applauded.

JS LILLEYMAN

Haematology. Pocket Consultant. BT Colvin, AC Newland. (Pp 371; £11.95.) Blackwells. 1988. ISBN 0 632 01092 4.

The intention of this book is to help non-specialists to investigate and manage patients with haematological disorders. It is described as a pocket consultant, presumably to fit into white coat pockets, and by the nature of such books has to be concise and often dogmatic. Despite these constraints, it provides an accurate account of currently accepted views in haematology.

It differs from similar books in dividing the systemic manifestations, the laboratory investigation, and the practical management into separate sections. The result is that different aspects of a single topic are dealt with in these various sections; this could cause some confusion in the reader, although there is a good index to help overcome this.

The authors have been successful in their intended aim of providing for non-specialists a useful book on haematological practice. Haematologists in specialist training will require more comprehensive texts to assess better the many areas of controversy which still remain in the subject.

DA WINFIELD

Gonococci and Meningococci. Ed JT Poolman, HC Zanan, TF Meyer, JE Heckels, PRH Makela, H Smith, EC Beuvery. (Pp 842; £149.) Martinus Nijhoff. 1988. ISBN 9-0247-3607-2.

This well produced tome is a compendium of all presentations made at the Fifth International Conference on Pathogenic Neisseriae held in Holland in 1986. It deals with epidemiology and vaccination, genetic aspects of antigenic diversity, outer membrane proteins and IgA-protease, lipopolysaccharides, H8 antigen and peptidoglycan and pathogenesis. Each section is preceded by a two page review, and while only Neisseriae have been studied these observations have a relevance for our better understanding of all microbial epidemiology and pathogenicity.

Neisseriae have been intensively studied for the past two decades, so current reports are highly specialised and usually not relevant to the general reader. Possession of this excellent book is essential for all workers actually engaged in any aspect of research on Neisseriae or the diseases they produce. Others involved in vaccine research or in examination of fundamental biology of other bacteria will find sections of great interest and relevance, and will require

repeated easy access to a copy. More general pathologists would do well to read the five short review essays and to remember the existence of the volume (and its four predecessors) for more detailed scrutiny should the need later arise.

AE JEPHCOTT

Botulism. The Organism, Its Toxins, The Disease. 2nd ed. LDS Smith, H Sugiyama. American Lecture Series in Clinical Microbiology. (Pp 171; \$34.75.) Charles C Thomas. 1988. ISBN 0-398-05446-0.

This excellent book is the latest in the series which is edited by Albert Balows, and the authors are well qualified and distinguished authorities on anaerobic bacteria including clostridia. The subtitle *The Organism, Its Toxins, The Disease* sums up the contents which are up to date and includes descriptions of recent work on the structure and actions of botulinum toxins and the recently recognised infant botulism. Four physiological groups of *Clostridium botulinum* are described and their geographical distribution, habitats, isolation, identification and characteristics reviewed. An account of the properties of *C botulinum* spores including their germination, outgrowth, and destruction are well done, and there is a new chapter on botulinum microbiology in foods. The last three chapters on botulism in man, animals, fish, and birds make fascinating reading. The chapter on botulism in man discusses not only the well known food poisoning form but also wound botulism, infant botulism, and a similar disease in adults. Each chapter is followed by a list of references cited in the text and there is an adequate index. Altogether, this high quality and well rounded publication is recommended to anyone who might have an interest in botulism or the organism behind it.

RN PEEL

Biopathology of the Liver. An Ultrastructural Approach. Ed PM Motta. (Pp 194; £70.) Kluwer Academic Publishers. 1988. ISBN 0-7462-0049-8.

This book on the ultrastructure of the liver is based on a workshop which was organised by the editor in 1986. As the foreword rightly points out, analysis of morphological changes is still the easiest way in which our brain can interpret phenomena and the mechanics that lie behind them. The selection of topics reflects the interests of the contributors. There are chapters on the normal hepatocyte, sinusoidal structure, micro-