

Marek's disease. Other chapters review exotic conditions including chemoreceptor tumours in laboratory and domestic animals. Although this volume contains a profusion of fascinating information, it is probably of little relevance to most tumour pathologists or those involved in cancer research. Nevertheless, it does represent a useful source of data on cancer in other species.

As with other volumes in this series the sixth (*Etiology of cancer in man*, AS Levine, ed) is well produced and thorough. Chapters on the role of Western culture (Burkitt) and of genetic factors (Purtilo *et al*) are followed by several chapters on breast cancer, a useful account of cancer in pregnancy, and discussions of treatment related tumours. Immune mechanisms are considered and there is a comprehensive account of secondary malignancies. As with the other volumes this is a pretty unbalanced account and much is superficial or not considered at all, while there is incredible detail in other areas. In volumes 7 and 8 (volume 7, *Local invasion and spread of cancer*, KW Brunson, ed; volume 8 *Metastasis and dissemination of tumours*, E Gorelik, ed) various aspects of cancer spread are discussed and there is some overlap between these volumes and topics covered in volumes 3 and 4. Both contain much useful information, and in particular, volume 8 has useful discussions of the patterns of metastasis in different human cancers. A further two volumes will soon be available and will be devoted to cancer management.

The books contain useful information but, unfortunately, are unbalanced, there is considerable duplication and in places they are already rather dated. At £60 a volume it is difficult to see who would buy such a series as much of the data in each volume would be found in most standard texts of cancer biology. They are for institutional libraries and wealthy departments, not individuals. Nevertheless, it should be said that most of us with an interest in cancer would find something of value in these volumes. They do have the merit of containing data and references on many more obscure areas of cancer biology and thus may be valuable to some, particularly those writing reviews.

PETER A HALL

Digestive Disease Pathology. Vol 1. Ed S Watanabe, M Wolff, SC Sommers. (Pp 229; £36.) Collier Macmillan. 1989. ISBN 0 02 424570 4.

This book consists of a rather dour collection of 10 monographs on gastrointestinal pathology. There is no introduction, preface, or foreword, and it is difficult to be certain who would buy such a book. There is heavy bias towards gastric cancer, immunopathology, and neuroendocrine pathophysiology: six of the chapters have a combination of poor English; and repetitive texts and overkill in illustrations makes for laborious reading, which is only occasionally brightened by the introduction of unfamiliar words and phrases such as "papillarily" and "bottom-layered." None of the chapters can be considered contemporary as references beyond 1985 are conspicuous by their absence. The gut lymphoma chapter by Meijer and his colleagues is particularly disappointing in this respect as much of the recent conceptual debate about

these tumours subsequent to recent immunohistochemical and molecular biological evidence is not included.

The book is relatively cheap, but even so I could not recommend it to practising pathologists: much of the information it contains can be readily accessed in other texts, probably with more contemporary references.

NA SHEPHERD

The ABC's of LIS: Computerizing your Laboratory Information System. FR Elevitch, RD Aller. (Pp 311; soft cover \$49.00.) Raven Press. 1989. ISBN 0-89189-223-0.

A pathologist working in the United Kingdom who is trapped in that outer circle of hell known only to those trying to implement a laboratory computer system in the NHS of 1990, will feel like St Augustine's sparrow when he reads this book. For a few hours he will be transported from a chaotic outer darkness where he is buffeted by insensate forces, including data processing departments, whose interests are rarely congruent with those of their supposed clients, into an environment filled with warmth, light, and intelligence. This didactic text, written by two experienced clinical pathologists, will guide the pathologist of whatever discipline through the complete cycle of acquiring, implementing, and operating a laboratory computer system. The neophyte will be painlessly taken through the tasks that have to be accomplished in planning, designing, justifying, selecting, implementing, operating, and updating a laboratory data management system. The authors write for those practising in the North American market, but many of the issues they address have a dreadfully familiar flavour as the United Kingdom enters the post-White Paper era.

I cannot recommend this book too highly. It would be worth buying it only for Appendix 4, a questionnaire to be filled in by prospective suppliers of a system. My advice is to buy three copies; keep one for yourself, give one to your most senior MLSO, and assume that the one you lend to the district computer manager won't come back.

A R W FORREST

Gastrointestinal pathology. An Atlas and Text. CM Fenoglio-Preiser, PE Lantz, MB Listrom, M Davis, FD Rilke. (Pp 906; 250 slides of illustrations; \$281.) Raven Press. 1989. ISBN 0-89167-525-3.

This is undoubtedly an impressive publication. As an atlas it works very well and includes many splendid colour photographs, both macroscopic and microscopic, the latter being only marginally the less effective. The diagrams and radiographs are equally good. The text, however, is somewhat variable, both in terms of content and quality, and suffers a little from being dislocated in places from the illustrations. There are also quite numerous faults albeit usually of a minor nature. On the other hand, the text is richly supplemented by some excellent tables and it is hard to find any serious omissions: indeed in terms of its scope it would be hard to

match. All the same as a reference book it will be valued less for its textual descriptions than for its visual presentations which will unquestionably prove to be of immense value not only to pathologists but to many other specialists seeking to acquire a comprehensive perception of gastrointestinal and oesophageal disease.

F D LEE

Antimicrobial Chemotherapy. 2nd ed. Ed D Greenwood. (Pp 372; £20.) Oxford University Press. 1989. ISBN 0-19-261817-2.

This volume represents the revised version of the antibiotic gospel according to Queen's Medical Centre Nottingham, where the authors perform their "Trivial Pursuits". Does this detract from the value of the book? Probably not, but their inbuilt bias in the choice of an injectable cephalosporin shines through. The text is based on a six week optional course for Nottingham medical students during their third year and is therefore aimed at other medical students. Junior doctors would be well advised to read it in order to improve their prescribing habits before acquiring those of their mentors. The volume is divided into five parts - general properties of antimicrobial agents, laboratory aspects, resistance problems, general principles of usage, and their therapeutic use. This latter section discusses selected areas of infection in depth. Details of dosage regimens have been omitted. The British reader is therefore recommended to use the *British National Formulary*, an invaluable source of information on dosages, side effects and, especially in these days of the White Paper, the cost of drugs. The best chapter is left until last - a postscript on the development and marketing of antibiotics. Professor Greenwood welcomes constructive suggestions to improve subsequent editions - mine would be to put this chapter first.

R C SPENCER

Principles and Applications of Laboratory Instrumentation. S Narayanan. (Pp 232; \$54.50.) Raven Press. 1989. ISBN 0-89189-273-7.

This handy paperback is ideal for entrants to laboratory medicine such as technical staff, scientists, and junior doctors. It is well written and produced and the clarity of the style and English make it a pleasure to read. In 20 chapters covering topics from basic spectrophotometry to DNA probes, techniques such as electrometry, fluorimetry, and chromatography, to name a few, are described. Formulae and diagrams illustrating the techniques are given and each chapter ends with references for further reading. Though generally excellent, the book has a few flaws. The title is misleading since the instrumentation described is predominantly for chemical analyses; other disciplines are scarcely featured. In spite of the inclusion of some recent techniques, the flavour of the book is a little dated. Thus spectrophotometry, continuous flow analysis, and