

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

paper chromatography are well covered but chemiluminescence and flow injection analysis, for example, are omitted. It would also be possible to read this book without realising the impact of microprocessors on laboratories. A chapter is badly needed on computers and peripherals to cover such topics as the principles of the microprocessor, interfaces, IEEE standards, and so on. As a basic introduction for laboratory staff this book is highly recommended despite its limitations. Whether it is affordable by junior staff is another matter.

J M RATTENBURY

The use of Synthetic Antigens for Diagnosis of Infectious Diseases. Report of a WHO Scientific Group. (Pp 74; paperback Sw Fr 9.) Technical Report Series No 784. ISBN 92 4 120784 1.

The WHO Technical Report Series makes available the findings of various international groups of experts on a broad range of topics. This report reviews the present state of synthetic antigens in the serological diagnosis of infectious disease and assesses their relative advantages and limitations compared with natural epitopes. It begins with an account of progress in peptide synthesis and recombinant DNA technology for production of antigens and procedures for identification of antigenic determinants. There follows reports on T cell diagnostic assays, the potential of synthetic reagents in the diagnosis of a variety of virus infections, and of research to improve the diagnosis and monitoring of progress in HIV infections and some bacterial and parasitic diseases. It ends with a few general conclusions and recommendations.

This easily read report is full of facts and relevant observations which will be of most use to researchers in assessing current progress, as a source of ideas, and as an indicator of the direction of future work, but many microbiologists will find it fascinating.

RN PEEL

Basic and Clinical Concepts of Lung Cancer. Ed HH Hansen. (Pp 368; £79.95.) Kluwer Academic Publishers. 1989. ISBN 0-7923-01536.

Published in a series entitled *Cancer Treatment and Research* this book presents 18 chapters on a variety of aspects of lung cancer by an international cast from 12 countries. It is a tribute to the skills of the editor that despite the varying background of the contributors the book is well written and easy to follow. Much of the content is related to treatment and therefore presumably aimed primarily at clinicians, but there are three chapters on pathology and others on the pathobiology of lung tumours which may well be of interest to pathologists.

Mackay (Texas) describes results from techniques such as cytopathology, immunocytochemistry, and electron microscopy, and the implications of the results for the classification of lung tumours. A group from Hong Kong have studied observer variability in the application of the WHO classification and

highlight the problems of comparisons of incidence and treatment among different centres. A Japanese group describe a range of immunohistochemistry results but admit that although these are useful for both routine diagnosis and study of tumour biology they have not yet achieved their aims of distinguishing tumours of high metastatic potential from those of low metastatic potential, and finding markers for responsiveness to treatment. There is also a chapter on oncogenes which includes useful references for those whose basic medical and pathology education occurred in the pre-oncogene era.

A book which aims to relate the current knowledge of the pathobiology of tumours and the current understanding of treatment techniques is obviously laudable. I fear that this text will be too specialised and clinically orientated for the general histopathologist, but it would be useful for those with a special interest in lung pathology and particularly for clinical oncologists in this field.

J CROW

A Colour Atlas and Textbook of the Histopathology of Mycotic Diseases. FW Chandler, W Kaplan, L Ajello. (Pp 333; soft cover £29.50.) Wolfe Medical Publications. 1989. ISBN 0 7234 1606 0.

This atlas is a reprint of the highly successful original published in 1980 due, presumably, to continuing demand but it has not been revised nor updated. The text is brief but it is adequate and clear, with useful tables. The references date from the 1960s and 1970s. The chapter on "Immunofluorescence diagnosis—current status" remains what it was 10 years ago. The main attraction of the book is the large number of colour illustrations which depict the organisms themselves and their histopathological setting. These are all of high quality and, as our knowledge of the morphology of fungi has not changed much, they still serve as a useful library of images to refer to. It is a pity, nevertheless, that a second edition of this beautifully produced book has not appeared and the reader in search of recent information on epidemiology, disease patterns, and other aspects such as AIDS has to turn to other works.

PP ANTHONY

Molecular Biology of Iridoviruses. Developments in Molecular Biology. Ed G Darai. (Pp 305; £79.95.) Kluwer Academic Publishers. 1990. ISBN 0-7923-0506-X.

The iridoviruses are the largest of the icosahedral viruses; they infect insects, frogs, fish and pigs. They are just large enough to be visible by light microscopy and to give iridescent colours from the diffraction of light by their crystalline arrays in the transparent corpses of their insect victims. They have a capsid of complex skew symmetry. This book is a series of essays by different authors and shows that these viruses are similar chemically and genetically to each other,

having circularly permuted and terminally redundant genomic DNA, which has in part been sequenced.

Most iridoviruses infect insects, but fish, frogs, and pigs each have one; the tick-borne pig virus causes African swine fever, of great economic importance in many countries, though not in the United Kingdom. It is of special interest because, like the HIV, it does not generate neutralising antibodies, and so there is no effective vaccine. Recent work showing its biochemical resemblances to the pox viruses is well described. The fish virus causes lymphocystis disease, also of importance to fish farmers.

These viruses have not obeyed—yet—the general rule that a virus group found in several different vertebrate species will sooner or later be found in man. Some of them, however, though they do not multiply in those animals, are very toxic to the livers of mice and rats.

This book is rather specialised for the general microbiologist.

TH FLEWETT

Clinical Dermatopathology. A Text and Colour Atlas. A Stevens, PR Wheeler, JS Lowe. (Pp 195; £49.50.) Churchill Livingstone. 1989. ISBN 0-44-02583-5.

The preface to this text and atlas asserts that, "dermatologists are performing skin biopsies in increasing numbers in quest of an accurate tissue diagnosis as the basis for effective management of skin disease. Unfortunately they do not always get the diagnostic pathology service which they deserve." The authors set out to remedy the problem with an illustrated account of the commoner skin conditions which turn up as biopsy specimens.

In this task they have triumphed. The photographs are in colour, well printed, of very good quality, and are well laid out. The selection of conditions illustrated is reasonably comprehensive and largely represents cases seen in the authors' routine practice. For a pathologist the most useful feature is the inclusion of good clinical photographs to complement the histopathology, so that some appreciation of the clinical appearance of lesions can be gained.

The book can be recommended to any pathologist or dermatologist who is starting on the road towards an acceptable level of dermatopathological literacy. Problems of differential diagnosis will have to be solved elsewhere but as an introduction to or refresher of the subject, it represents good value.

N KIRKHAM

Organ Transplantation in Children. Perspectives in Pediatric Pathology. Vol 13. Ed CR Abramowsky, RB Colvin. (Pp 206; 112 figs; £95. Karger. 1989. ISBN 3-8055-5019-7.

This monogram is the latest of the *Perspectives in Pediatric Pathology* series and covers pathological and related clinical aspects of