

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