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BOOK REVIEWS

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This is the first of a two volume set in the Current Topics in Pathology series, describing the morphological and immunohistochemical changes within the various functional compartments of the lymph node; the second volume describes changes occurring in lymph nodes in association with immunodeficiency and neoplasia.

The contents include chapters correlating structure and function within various lymph node compartments, descriptions of the germinal centre response, of T lymphocytes in non-neoplastic lymph nodes and plasma- cytoid T cells, and of macrophages and accessory cells. The volume concludes with an in-depth study of immunoelectronmicroscopy of lymph nodes.

The authorship of this book shows a strong European bias (20 of the 25 contributors) and in some of the chapters it is apparent that English is not the authors’ first language, which makes for a rather turgid style. Nevertheless, this is an admirable book for the lymph node enthusiast containing information not often seen in other pathological books. The text is well illustrated with high quality photomicrographs, electronmicrographs, and line drawings. Most of the chapters are extensively referenced and contain references up to 1989. Although this book will not be of particular interest to the general surgical pathologist, it can be strongly recommended to histologists and immunologists with a particular interest in structural and functional correlation within the immune system.


Of these collected reports from the British Committee for Standardisation in Haematology (BCSH), the best is on haemoglobinopathy screening, with good accounts of G6PD deficiency, other aspects of blood banking, massive blood loss, management of anticoagulant treatment, thrombophilia and transfusion "menus".

The title is misleading, however, and should perhaps have been "Standards for Some Aspects of Haematological Practice".

Standard haematological practice in the United Kingdom today is surely broader than this book implies. Excluded are laboratory aspects of cytology and cytochemistry, general coagulation, cytopathology and immunohistochemistry. The last chapter of the book is an uncritical description of haemapheresis and 10% an account of blood-bank microplate techniques which most NEQAS contributors do not use. This last chapter is at least a positive if unbalanced statement unlike chapters 2 to 4 (another 10%) on automated cell counters and manual blood films which will probably neither reflect nor influence selection criteria for the latter in most United Kingdom laboratories.

Chapter 1 epitomises the heterogeneity of style, breadth, and depth of this book. It is intended as a description of "good laboratory practice". It may have emphasised the importance of the medical consultation process, NEQAS, and the CPSM and College accreditation schemes it is unbalanced, incomplete, and poor PR for the specialty.


The authors have succeeded in their aim to present "the bare essentials of immunology in a palatable form . . ." which "will enable most students to grasp the essential principles". They have produced "lecture size" chapters which are readable and clear. Medical students will enjoy the snippets of clinical information which make the text interesting and relevant. There is good layout of the text and excellent diagrams. The book is available from the British Society for Haematology.

This book is very much a basic course and not really a standard text, nor does it seem that it was intended to be. Any immunology text of basic principles needs to be selective in order to make it clear. Students will find it a great help, especially those who find immunology difficult or boring, and this text is neither.

Like all authors in this discipline, Benjamins and Lenkovitz had to produce a second edition relatively quickly to cover the rapidly developing fields of genetic control, T cell differentiation, and therapeutic advances for immunological diseases as well as AIDS. The only criticism is that the index is awful and does not come up to the high standards of the book.


This is an anthology of articles published in Laboratory Investigation under the "Biologic..."