Infection in the Newborn. Perinatal Practice. Vol 6. Guest eds. J de Louvois, D Harvey. (Pp 163; £39.50.) John Wiley. 1990. ISBN 0-471-92679-5.

This book is the sixth in a series aimed at bridging the gap between obstetrics and neonatology. The volume is based on a workshop on neonatal infection and deals with important areas where there have been advances in our knowledge of the subject. There are separate chapters that review: the inflammatory response to infection; post mortem studies of infection in the newborn; diagnostic tests for bacterial infection; hospital-acquired infections; listeriosis; group B streptococcal infections; human immunodeficiency virus; virological topics; infection in the mother; meningitis and septicaemia. Further chapters cover, respectively, immunoglobulin treatment in neonatal sepsis and antibiotic policies.

The 17 authors have adopted a somewhat different approach to their chapters, some limiting themselves to new aspects, while others comprehensively review the entire subject. Several of the chapters contain previously unpublished data. The chapter on listeriosis amounted to only two and a half pages, and, overall, this chapter was disappointing. The chapter on maternal infections had the largest field to cover and many of the infections were covered excellently despite remarkable brevity; the section on bacteriuria however ignored recent publications which question the cost effectiveness of screening.

Overall, this book should achieve the aims of the series. It is an invaluable source of data and is a welcome addition to my personal library.

RH GEORGE

Pocket Companion to Robbins' Pathologic Basis of Disease. SL Robbins, RS Cotran, V Kumar. (Pp 558; soft cover £13.50.) WB Saunders Company. 1991. ISBN 0-7216-3542-3.

Medical teachers have an understandable tendency to emphasise their own subject and to recommend much larger textbooks than their students can deal with in the time available. Robbins' *Pathologic Basis of Disease* is a fine large textbook, perhaps the IBM standard for undergraduate pathology texts—the one with which others should be compatible. Most British medical students, with the relatively short time allocated to pathology in the curriculum, tend to use such a volume for reference rather than as a basic textbook.

This "pocket companion" consists of 558 narrow pages (124 general pathology, 362 systemic, 72 index) packed with lists, facts, and references to the parent text. It does fit the pocket and its shape makes for convenient use on public transport. The authors recognise that, as a synopsis, it needs amplification to give understanding and a sense of proportion. For example, in this volume collagenous colitis features in large letters and in almost as much text as diverticular disease. Inevitably such a book contains statements that one considers misleading, wrong, or very economic with the truth. Precise is a difficult art but if used as the authors recommend in conjunction with the parent volume—this

could be very helpful text. Other more illicit roles may be as a well structured aide-memoire for teachers or for students in the pre-exam cramming that shouldn't be necessary but which usually occurs.

DR DAVIES

In Situ Hybridization. Principles and Practice. Ed JM Polak, JO'D McGee. (Pp 247; £25.) Oxford University Press. 1990. ISBN 0-19-261906-3.

Several generations of cytochemistry have developed descriptive histology into a study of cellular function, and "in situ" hybridisation has added the localisation of cellular and microbial genes and mRNA. This elegant, spiral-bound volume follows the best cytochemical tradition by relating basic molecular biology to bench routines. Molecular and methodological principles are followed by discussion of radioactive and non-isotopic labelling, and the use of oligonucleotide and cRNA probes. The overview on the sensitivity of alternative approaches and on measuring nucleic acid are useful. The value of relating DNA, mRNA, and protein studies to unravel cell phenotypes and control of protein synthesis and storage in neuroendocrine function, fetal development, and viral disease is neatly summarised, together with the application of "in situ" hybridisation to cytogenetics.

Discussion of non-isotopic methods for routine histopathological tissue in comparison with other hybridisation methods and the polymerase chain reaction is inevitably inconclusive, given the rapid current developments. A final chapter gives an insight on how the high quality illustrations for this very useful contribution to research methodology were achieved.

D JENKINS

Clinical epidemiology: principles, methods and applications

September 30–October 4, 1991

Department of Epidemiology/Health Care Research, University of Limburg, Maastricht, The Netherlands.

The following topics will be covered: occurrence measures for disease events, validity and reliability of diagnosis prediction, and measurement of prognosis implementation of study results in daily practice.

Suitable for health care professionals involved in day to day patient management (physicians, nurses, physiotherapists), their teachers and those who are involved in health care research.

Information from F Hein, Clinical Epidemiology Course, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Limburg, PO Box 616, 6200 MD Maastricht, The Netherlands.
Telephone: 31-43887396.
Telefax: 31-43255643.

First Congress European Society of Histotechnology Amsterdam

22–23 November 1991

The new European Society of Histotechnology has been formed by representatives of France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The inaugural congress of the Society will be held at the Academisch Medisch Centrum (AMC) in Amsterdam, and opened by Lee Luna—former President of the NSH (USA). A wide ranging programme, including in situ hybridisation, immunocytochemistry, cytology and morphometry will be presented. Members will have the opportunity to confirm the constitution of the new Society, and to elect officers and representatives to the committee.

Further details of the congress and of membership may be obtained from Mrs M Knowles, ESH, PO Box 121, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 3RJ.

NOTICES

ACP Locum Bureau

The Association of Clinical Pathologists runs a locum bureau for consultant pathologists.

Applicants with the MRCPATH who would like to do locums and anyone requiring a locum should contact The General Secretary, School of Biological Sciences, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9QC. Tel and Fax: 0273 678435.

Erratum

Our attention has been drawn to an error in the paper "Improved silver staining of nucleolar organiser regions in paraffin wax sections using an inverted incubation technique" by Coghill *et al* (1990;43:1029–31), in which it was not clearly stated that COVERPLATE, made by Shandon Scientific Limited, Runcorn, Cheshire, is a registered Trade Mark, and not merely a generic descriptive term for the device in question. We wish to make the point understood to avoid future abuse of that Trade Mark.