

Book reviews

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Pediatric Molecular Pathology: Quantitation and Applications. Perspectives in Pediatric Pathology. Vol. 16. Ed AJ Garvin, TJ O'Leary, J Bernstein, HS Rosenberg. (Pp 170; £91.30.) Karger. 1992. ISBN 3-8055-5496-6.

The sixteenth in the series, *Perspectives in Pediatric Pathology* is an odd combination of five articles which did not meet the expectations raised by the title or from the foreword. Two of the articles were very interesting; the first describes applications of immunohistochemistry and molecular biological techniques to the examination of developing organs in the embryo and fetus. The illustrations are stunning. The localisation of enzymes and growth factors in specific tissue and organ sites at different stages of development might be expected to attract morphologists. As a technique it has tremendous potential for improving the understanding of both normal and abnormal development. The second article considers the potential mechanism of spontaneous regression in neuroblastoma, a phenomenon which has intrigued clinicians and researchers for many years. Much of this work was done in the author's own laboratory and makes fascinating reading.

There is a very long description of peripheral primitive neuroectodermal tumours which flies in the face of the stated aims of this volume in that most of it is spent discussing morphology. Very little space is given to molecular and cytogenetics which now constitute a very important part of the differential diagnostic process in current practice. The other two papers comprise a description of the application of PCR to fixed tissues and an account of quantitative methods in paediatric pathology. The latter gives a brief general overview of well established methods using grid points or linear intercepts. Drawbacks in using these techniques in organised structures are pointed out. Much of the article is devoted to morphometric analysis of the kidney and discusses its application to the better assessment of certain diseases. However, newer methods such as disector and fractionator analyses are mentioned by name only.

"Perspectives" is indexed in *Current Contents* and *Index Medicus*. If one of the titles catches your eye, borrow it.

JW KEELING

Neoplasms with Follicular Differentiation. AB Ackerman, PA de Viragh, N Chongchitnant. (Pp 703; £120.) Lea & Febiger. 1993. ISBN 0-8121 1542-2.

This is the second book in a series entitled *Ackerman's Histologic Diagnosis of Neoplastic Skin Diseases: A Method by Pattern Analysis*. The first volume dealt with eccrine sweat gland neoplasms; further volumes on sebaceous glands and apocrine glands are to follow, and possibly others. This book provides a level of detail in excess of the needs of most routine histopathologists and might even strain the enthusiasm of pathologists with a special interest in skin. The degree of restricted focus also leaves some conditions in limbo, and where lesions of mixed lineage fall depends on the authors' interpretation of what they consider to be the major component. The authors have taken a firm stand on some tumours that most pathologists would expect to appear here: keratoacanthoma is excluded because the authors feel that it does not show follicular, only infundibular, differentiation; tricholemmal carcinoma is not considered as the authors believe that it is either a clear cell basal cell carcinoma, or a squamous carcinoma.

A new group of tumours, pan-folliculomas, is introduced and classification is firmly based on morphology throughout. As in the eccrine book that preceded this, great emphasis is placed on scanning magnification appearances (or silhouettes) at the expense of cytology, even for determining malignancy.

There is some description of electron microscopy, and quite justifiably, little attention is paid to immunocytochemistry because, as far as I know, only the ratios of certain cytokeratins distinguish one part of the hair follicle from another.

In summary, the book is well produced, lavishly illustrated, and very helpful if you wish to classify hair follicle tumours.

DWK COTTON

Diagnostic Pathology of Infectious Diseases. GL Woods, Y Gutierrez. (Pp 656; £79.) Lea & Febiger. 1993. ISBN 0-8121-1604-6.

The author states that this book is intended as a reference for microbiologists and microbiology residents, and that the information can be used by infectious disease clinicians, medical students, and medical technologists. However as a histopathologist, I can guarantee that the book would also be a welcome addition to any histopathology library. Three of her four coauthors are histopathologists, while the fourth is an infectious disease clinician, and this balance is reflected in the text and numerous excellent illustrations.

After a short, concise introduction which broadly outlines host-pathogen relations and the pathogenesis of infectious disease,

the bulk of the book is divided into four sections: viruses; bacteria; fungi; and parasites. Each organism is dealt with under the headings of epidemiology, pathogenesis, clinical manifestations and laboratory diagnosis (microbiological and histopathological).

The text is liberally illustrated with 74 colour plates of exceptionally high quality (although the caption for the Warthin-Starry stain in the section of liver from an infant with congenital syphilis is inadequate). I particularly liked the colour plate of a Warthin-Starry stain showing the bacilli of cat-scratch disease in a lymph node. There are about 80 aptly chosen histopathology black and white photomicrographs, together with about a dozen each of macroscopic photographs and electron micrographs, and a few cytology preparations. Additionally, there are numerous microbiological photographs, clinical pictures and diagrams of organisms.

It is disappointing that the chapter on hepatitis B virus and the delta agent contains no histopathology photomicrographs to illustrate the difference between acute viral hepatitis with and without piecemeal necrosis; chronic persistent and chronic active hepatitis; nor a discussion on the association between morphology and the degree of elimination of the virus. There are good up to date descriptions of bacillary angiomatosis and its causative agent *Rochalimaea henselae*, with a good photomicrograph and electron micrograph showing the organism. The concise discussion of prion related diseases contains all the information a final MRCPath candidate is likely to need. The book is reasonably priced, and would be a useful addition to any teaching department histopathology library. It would also be a useful reference text for histopathologists dealing with material from immunocompromised patients, and patients who have contracted tropical disease as a result of travel abroad.

M MALONE

Cancer Medicine. 3rd edn. Ed JF Holland, E Frei, RC Bast, DW Kufe, DL Morton, RR Weichselbaum. (Pp 2501; £167.) Lea & Febiger. 1993. ISBN 0-81211-422-1.

This is a new edition of a book which had long been out of date. Eleven years have elapsed since the second edition of *Cancer Medicine*. During this time three new editions of its chief competitor, DeVita, Hellman, and Rosenberg's *Cancer—Principles and Practice of Oncology* have appeared. So how does the new Holland and Frei measure up?

A brief comparison with the second edition confirms the editors' claim that this book is entirely new. Four new editors have joined the team. A new typeface and layout make it more accessible for rapid reference or browsing, so that even those chapters which have been revised rather than completely rewritten have a more modern feel.

The strong point of the book is the introductory section, which comprises a thousand pages covering the basic sciences of cancer biology and therapeutics. These are generally well written and provide balanced reviews of their subjects; they should