samples. There are nine chapters dedicated to the female genital tract and a further seven chapters covering a range of other body systems. On the whole, the book is clearly written, accurate, and easy to read. However, the two final chapters on image analysis and flow cytometry are rather disappointing and a little out of date. For those about to sit examinations, the quiz in the appendix offers the opportunity for rapid revision, but I did find some of the answers rather obscure.

This book would have benefited from colour illustrations. The black and white pictures are generally of a high quality, but they fail to provide the clarity and subtlety of staining pattern necessary to be really useful to the inexperienced reader. Another serious deficiency in the book is the use of the Bethesda system of reporting cervical smears which could lead to confusion and difficulties in interpretation for cytotechnologists in the United Kingdom. Although the authors make an attempt to correlate the Bethesda system with other classifications, they fail to mention dyskaryosis which is the terminology used throughout the United Kingdom. Despite these criticisms, this book is not overpriced and would form a useful addition to departmental cytopathology libraries.

EUPHEMIA MCGOOGAN

ABC of Transfusion. 2nd edn. Marcela A Contreras. (Price UK £12.95, Overseas £14.50.) BMA. 1992. ISBN 0-7279-0754-9.

It is with some discomfort that I have to say I can find nothing to criticise in this short and uncluttered guide to the complete world of transfusion medicine. I mean, there must be *something* wrong with it, but I cannot think what it might be.

The text is lively, concise, up to date, and easy to read. Dogma rules and there are very few references, but this is an asset. The illustrations are liberal and helpful. There are little take-away messages in boxes dotted about the book with such aphorisms as "sick babies are more likely to be transfused than any other patients" or "transfusion of less than two units of red cells is bad clinical practice". Superficially these two comments might seem incompatible, but in the context of the chapters concerned no one is likely to be confused. Quite the reverse.

Who is it for? Definitely students (all shapes and sizes, under and postgraduate), anaesthetists, surgeons and physicians. Haematologists will use it surreptitiously, relieved to have such an easy source of information and guilty that they don't know it all already. In short it is hard to think of any clinical group who will not find it useful. There are even bits relevant to histopathologists. What more can be said?

JS LILLEYMAN

A pathology primer in verse. Leslie H Sobin, 2nd edn. Nomad Press, Washington DC, 1991 (\$US 10).

*To read a pathology text,
One's brain has to keep itself flexed,
So a book all in verse,*

*Might be less of a curse,
Though it makes one ask whatever next.*

*The traditional student may dread it,
But when one has actually read it,
One can say the result
Is amusing, if cult
And one feels Dr S deserves credit.*

Somehow Leslie Sobin has managed to encompass a wide range of pathological observations into five line stanzas along the style of that shown above. This second edition is an expansion of the first, published in 1978. Originally intended as an amusement it does, however, also contain a considerable amount of accurate, factual information. I recommend this inexpensive little book to you as a piece of light reading which may also enhance your recall of pathology!

DR TURNER

Atlas of Gynecologic Histopathology. Eds DS Heller, ML Stone. (Pp 172; illustrations 175; 50.) Churchill Livingstone. 1992. ISBN 0-316-35501-1.

This atlas of gynaecological pathology, according to the authors, aims to present a simple and concise guide to, and review of, the microscopic features of frequently encountered lesions. My immediate reaction on receipt of the book was one of disappointment on finding that the illustrations were all in black and white, rather than colour as is already available in comparable books such as that by Fox and Buckley (MTP Press Ltd). Although the illustrations are on the whole of good quality, there are some which have been underexposed. Equally, some of the original sections, which have been used for illustrative purposes, include microtome knife scores. The contents cover the histopathology of lesions of vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tube, ovary and pregnancy, and also include sections on gynaecological cytology and breast histopathology. The selection of lesions presented is interesting, but I do wonder how many pathologists would regard, for example, a fallopian tube adenocarcinoma as "a frequently encountered lesion". The text which accompanies the illustrations is rather brief and I would have thought to the potential reader would be inadequate for a proper understanding of the lesions being considered.

It is suggested that the book will be of value to trainee gynaecologists and clinicians wishing to review pathology. However, there are many excellent texts with good quality illustrations already available in this field, and I would find it difficult to recommend this particular book to my colleagues.

AJ ROBERTSON

The Royal College of Surgeons of England Atlas of Surgical Pathology. Ed JL Turk, CDM Fletcher. (Pp 300; 1075 illustrations; \$23150.) Raven Press. 1992. ISBN 0-397-44843-0

The Royal College of Surgeons has a long history of commitment to pathology museums, starting with John Hunter's pioneering collection, which by 1941, when

it was devastated by an incendiary bomb, had accumulated 15 000 specimens. The survivors were used to prime the new Wellcome Museum of Pathology which is the source of the 1 075 illustrations in this well produced atlas.

Each illustration has an informative legend, setting it in a clinical context, then describing the appearances and commenting on their meaning. The specimens have been photographed in their containers, which, because of judicious cropping, intrude as little as possible into the illustrations; but some are marred by scratched perspex.

It could be argued that a modern atlas of surgical pathology should be illustrated with fresh unfixed specimens rather than the rather tired-looking faded specimens in museums, but some conditions are, fortunately, of such exceptional rarity (for example, 8-19, the entire head of an elderly man ravaged by a basal cell carcinoma) that there is little chance of acquiring them prospectively. With fixed specimens, there is also the opportunity to perform meticulous dissections to demonstrate important features (for example, 1-85, a beautiful demonstration of varicose veins). A few illustrations just serve to satisfy our innate curiosity (for example, 4-79, bladder calculus formed around a tie-pin).

The main purpose of this atlas is to bring the contents of the Wellcome Museum to a wider audience. There is too much here for undergraduates and the emphasis is on conditions presenting as surgical problems. Surgeons and pathologists in training will find this book a useful resource.

JCE UNDERWOOD

Hematology of Infancy and Childhood. 2 volumes. 4th edn. Nathan and Oski. (Price: 184/\$250.) Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Ltd. 1992. ISBN 0 7216 3357 9.

"The gold standard..." screams the advertising leaflet for this 2 000 page, two volume, 5.5 kg multiauthor textbook, quoting from a review of the third edition. One immediately wonders if, as with posters outside theatres staging productions claimed to be "riveting" "an evening to remember" or "a joyous experience", some vital qualifier such as "not" or "hardly" might be missing.

The reader should be reassured. For size and effort alone the description would be appropriate, and the work is in reality a major reference source on haematology of human beings of all ages and not just children. There is much basic science, and extensive revision has been undertaken since the last edition five years ago. The editors must have a task akin to that of painting the Forth Bridge (that is, never ending), for the production time of a publication of this breadth and depth, marshalling some 90 expert contributors, must be a quinquennium at least.

Children's blood diseases tend to fall into two categories, extremely common and very rare. It is for the latter type that the contents particularly excel. To enter the literature (the North American literature, anyway) on any haematological topic, however obscure, this text is as good as a CD-ROM database. Although most sections are readable, the book is definitely for reference, not browsing. Its size and weight