

essential, so that the core function of the microbiology department may be modified as needed without loss of standards or quality. Clinicians rely on laboratories for accurate and reliable results—this book helps to enhance this role.

The book is well written and the new method of highlighting relevant aspects is helpful for quick reference. The section on individual bacteria is clear and comprehensive, although some practices, such as the use of Griffith's tubes for crushing tissues, may be frowned on by today's health and safety inspectors. Parasitology and serology are comprehensively covered and should assist any routine laboratory when processing relevant specimens.

The section covering the longstanding tradition of "in vitro" antibiotic susceptibility testing has been significantly updated, with the addition of interpretation and explanation of the relevant routine methods (most useful for examinations). It should be helpful in translating in vitro results into clinical practice. There is not much on the molecular aspects of the subject, but such matters are usually left to specialist laboratories.

In contrast, the chapter on "hospital epidemiology" emphasises the essential bacteria, with great emphasis on methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and the role of the laboratory in the management of this problem, but does not give as much detail on other problematic bacteria such as multiply antibiotic resistant Gram negative bacteria. The role of the microbiologist and intensive care nurse in monitoring operating theatres (when, why, and how) would have completed the section. The role of biological indicators used for chemical sterilisation, and the advantages and disadvantages, would also have been valuable, as would material on the interaction with occupational health and health and safety personnel.

This edition has taken recent developments and simplified a complex subject so that it can be understood by anyone working in the field. It is essential reading for medical and non-medical trainees who are either preparing for examinations or who wish to understand routine laboratory procedures. It is especially valuable for trained staff as a quick reference, and is recommended as a useful adjunct to any routine microbiology library. I bemoan the fact that some of the extremely helpful tables found in the earlier editions are replaced by updated versions, but will continue referring to it in times of need.

S MEHTAR

Immunocytochemistry in Diagnostic Histopathology. B Jasani, KW Schmid. (Pp 206; 92 illustrations; £49.50.) Churchill Livingstone. 1993. ISBN 0-443-04018-4.

This slim volume is aimed at the non-specialist and provides a useful, practical guide to immunohistochemistry as applied to diagnostic histopathology. The authors give a brief historical outline of the subject together with general information on the current primary antibodies and secondary detection systems available, detailing their advantages and disadvantages. The discussion on possible technical sources of unsatisfactory reactions should make it possible

to discuss these problems intelligently with the MLSO staff (who in our department found the volume useful.)

The main bulk of the book focuses on specific diagnostic areas, drawing on the extensive experience of the authors. There is, for example, a detailed treatment of lymphoreticular tumours and a section on soft tissue tumours which contains superb differential diagnostic tables. A chapter on neuroendocrine tumours is particularly lucid. There is also a short account of the current state of play in the prognostic typing of tumours, including oestrogen receptors in breast carcinoma, and the range and use of markers of cell proliferative activity. These practical chapters are supplemented by useful algorithms dealing with differential diagnostic problems contained in the appendix, which also includes a section on technical methods.

There is certainly a wealth of information here, which, hopefully, should not be out of date for some years, and the volume is well worth having to hand as a bench book, especially in smaller departments which use immunohistochemistry less extensively. On the negative side, the very concise presentation of information with much use of detailed tables does not make it a particularly easy read in places, and rather too much use is made of abbreviations. Printing errors creep in occasionally. Other minor criticisms are the very variable quality of photomicrographs and that, considering the volume is aimed at the non-specialist, it is not always made clear which antibodies can be used on formalin fixed paraffin embedded sections. These problems, however, detract little from a good, useful book.

GM KONDRATOWICZ

Notices

Outcomes into Clinical Practice 7 June 1994 International Hotel, Marsh Wall, Docklands

This conference, organised by the BMA, BMJ, and UK Clearing House on health economics, will explore the opportunities for outcome assessment in clinical practice: sharing examples of good practice.

Parallel sessions held by expert speakers will include discussions on:

- using outcome information to improve care
- purchasing outcomes
- dicing with death rates.

The meeting is particularly geared to clinical teams in both hospital and general practice.

For further details please contact: Pru Walters, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP. Telephone: 071 383 6518.

Histopathology of the bone marrow St Mary's Hospital Medical School Wednesday 30 March 1994

The Course is for consultant haematologists, consultant histopathologists, and advanced trainees in haematology and histopathology.

The course will cost £75, which includes a light lunch.

Course organiser and further information from: Dr Barbara Bain, Department of Haematology, St Mary's Hospital Medical School, London W2 1PG. Telephone: 071 723 1252 extn: 5995. Fax: 071 724 7349.

Lecturers: Dr D Clark, Dr I Lampert,

Royal Brompton National Heart and Lung Institute
in association with
Royal Brompton National Heart and Lung Hospital and St George's Hospital,
London

Practical cardiovascular pathology October 17-18 1994

This practical "hands on" course approaches in detail the problems that face the diagnostic pathologist when dealing with cardiovascular pathology. The approach to a cardiac post mortem and sudden death will be emphasised. Cardiac specimens will be available for dissection and analysis and practical demonstrations; video demonstrations will also feature. There will be a slide seminar, with slides distributed to all participants. The course is aimed at trainees studying for the MRCPATH and also senior pathologists who wish to update their knowledge.

Enquiries should be made to: Education & Conference Centre, National Heart & Lung Institute, Dovehouse Street, London SW3 6LY. Telephone: 071-351-8172. Fax 071-376-3442.

Association of Clinical Pathologists

Trainee Membership

Trainee membership of the Association is available to medical practitioners who are in training in pathology. Trainee members are able to remain in this category until they achieve consultant or other career grade status (this includes staff grades). The annual subscription is £32.50 for those resident in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland and £75 for those overseas. The annual subscription may be claimed against tax.

Trainee members receive the *Journal of Clinical Pathology* each month. Other benefits are reduced registration fees to attend ACP scientific meetings, all the documents regularly sent to full members of the Association including *ACP News*, which has a regular column for trainees, and the twice yearly summary of pathology courses included in the ACP programme of postgraduate education. Trainee members have their own representative body, the Trainee Members' Group, which has a direct input to Council.

For Trainee Membership apply to: The Honorary Secretary, Association of Clinical Pathologists, 221 Preston Road, Brighton BN1 6SA. Tel: (0273) 561188. Fax: 0273 541227.