

Book reviews

If you wish to order, or require further information regarding, the titles reviewed here, please write or telephone the BMJ Bookshop, PO Box 295, London WC1H 9TE. Tel: 071 383 6244. Fax: 071 383 6662. Books are supplied post free in the UK and for British Forces Posted Overseas addresses. Overseas customers should add 15% for postage and packing. Payment can be made by cheque in sterling drawn on a UK bank, or by credit card (MasterCard, VISA, or American Express) stating card number, expiry date, and your full name.

The price and availability are occasionally subject to revision by the Publishers.)

Acute Pancreatitis. Diagnosis and Therapy. Ed EL Bradley III. (Pp 312; \$157.50.) Raven Press. 1993. ISBN 0-7817-0091-4.

This multiauthor book is written almost entirely by and is chiefly of interest to clinicians. There are, however, several chapters of interest to pathologists. These include the pathophysiology of acute pancreatitis, a comparison of necrotising pancreatitis among various countries, and the epidemiology of pancreatic abscesses and pseudocysts. There is much information on the investigation of acute pancreatitis and treatment, both new and established. Three chapters are primarily concerned with pathology. The pathology of severe acute pancreatitis is discussed along with its aetiology—alcohol, gall stones, and other possible causes. Its natural history, with the possible outcomes of resolution or pseudocyst formation, is considered. The primary event remains uncertain, but there is some evidence for lysosomal activation of proenzymes. There is a description of the pathology of pseudocysts, their hallmark being a lack of epithelial lining. Their natural history with the vascular evolution is also covered. Finally, there is a chapter on the pathology of oedematous or interstitial pancreatitis, an acute pancreatitis where gross necrosis and haemorrhage have not been grossly demonstrated. The diagnosis is established on upper abdominal pain and a raised serum amylase concentration.

This book would be useful for the general hospital library and as background reading for the gastroenterologically orientated pathologist.

D HOPWOOD

Bone Histomorphometry. EF Eriksen, DW Axelrod, F Melsen. (Pp 96; soft cover \$19.00.) Raven Press. 1993. ISBN 0-7817-0122-8.

This small book describes in simple terms the normal microanatomy of bone and bone cell function. It introduces the concept of bone remodelling in units and the dynamic changes which occur in bone. The basis of the evaluation of bone by histomorphometry is described along with the clinical indications, in the opinion of the authors, for bone biopsy. Various histomorpho-

metric indices are described and formulae for derived measures of bone activity are given. Some chapters are too short and superficial to be of much value, but on the whole the book is well conceived and executed. Each chapter has a useful summary and there is a single bibliography of 59 references for the whole work.

The illustrations are in colour and of variable quality in reproduction. There are now several books dealing with bone histomorphometry which are much larger and more threatening than this one. But it should be useful to diagnostic histopathologists and physicians with an interest in metabolic bone disease.

PA REVELL

The Scars of Venus. A History of Venereology. JD Oriel. (Pp 248; £65.) Springer. 1994. ISBN 3-540-19844-X.

David Oriel has long had an interest in the background to this speciality, and his enthusiasm and knowledge are obvious on reading this book, despite his disclaimer in the preface. His worthy contribution is enhanced by the typography chosen, and the many excellent black and white illustrations. He looks at the history of syphilis, "the French disease", presenting the two theories of its origin in Europe with clinical calm, unlike some previous writers on the subject. There are chapters on the great advances in syphilology during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Chancroid, donovanosis, and gonorrhoea are also well documented. The section on genital warts is particularly helpful, reflecting the author's long interest in the subject. Chlamydial infections are also well covered.

The venereologists who pushed the science and practice forward are also described, although Ambrose King and Claude Nicol, the worthy successors to Colonel Harrison and some of Oriel's own teachers, are omitted. As history blends with the present, a few pages are devoted to HIV infection, but as with clinical texts in this subject, the definitive work remains to be written. This is the best volume so far on the history of venereology and should be read by all interested in the subject, and especially those who teach to others.

P SIMMONS

Notices

The Society for Tropical Veterinary Medicine

Third Biennial Meeting (STVM-95)
San José, Costa Rica, May 8-12, 1995

Two symposia, one on Vector-borne pathogens: challenges for the 21st Century and the second on international trade and animal diseases, as well as general sessions on tropical veterinary medicine.

For further information, fax Dr James A House at 010-516-323-2798 in the USA or write to USDA/APHIS/FADDL, Box 848, Greenport, NY 11944, USA.

The Royal Society of Health Conference

Management of Trust Hospitals (MH/404)

Date: Wednesday 14 September 1994.
Venue: The University of Leeds, Clinical Sciences Building, St Jaes's Hospital, Leeds LS9 7TF.
Fee: £80 Non-members; £50 for RSH members and charities; £30 for retired RSH members and students; £70 per head for groups of 3 or more.

Cardiovascular Disease (CD/308)

Date: Thursday 22 September 1994
Venue: The Society for Chemical Industry, 14/15 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PS.
Fee: £80 Non-members; £50 for RSH members and charities; £30 for retired RSH members and students; £70 per head for groups of 3 or more.

Weaning (ZW/408)

Date: Tuesday 11 October 1994
Venue: The Society for Chemical Industry, 14/15 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PS.
Fee: £80 Non-members; £50 for RSH members and charities; £30 for retired RSH members and students; £70 per head for groups of 3 or more.

All enquiries to Anne Faichney/Iris Murphy, Conference Department, The Royal Society of Health, RSH House, 38A St George's Drive, London SW1V 4BH. Telephone: 071 630 0121. Fax: 071-976 6847.

XII Latin American Congress of Clinical Biochemistry Buenos Aires, Argentina September 5-10, 1995

Simultaneously with the III Argentine Congress of Clinical Biochemistry (CUBRA III), the II Meeting of Biochemistry of the Mercosur, and the I Latin American Symposium of Biochemical Education.

Invited lecturers from the United States, Europe and Latin American countries will develop a scientific programme including plenary lectures, symposia, round tables, as well as workshops, and courses on different areas of clinical chemistry, endocrinology, haematology, immunology, toxicology, bacteriology, mycology, parasitology, virology, etc. Poster sessions, and a commercial exhibition will be included.

For further information please contact:

Secretaría/Secretariat, XII Latin American Congress of Clinical Biochemistry, Federación Bioquímica de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, 6 No. 1344, 1900 La Plata, Argentina. Telephone: (54 21) 38821, 42797, 253597. Fax: (54 21) 254224. E-mail (Internet): congreso@fbpba.sld.org.ar