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 Specialist Journals, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR; Tel 0171 383 6209;
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 Polarised light examination of a haematoxylin and eosin preparation of an aortic atheromatous plaque. Note the birefringent lipid crystals. Supplied by Dr D N Slater.

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medical education. Students will also find the question and answers useful in the last minute revision for pathology finals.

S H GILLESPIE

Pediatric Cytopathology. Geisinger KR, Silverman JF. (Pp 361; \$165.) Lippincott-Raven. 1995. ISBN 0-89189-378-4.

Exfoliative and fine needle aspiration (FNA) cytology are neglected topics in paediatric pathology, and this clearly written and illustrated book may be useful for pathologists wishing to redress this deficiency.

There are several sections on leukaemias, central nervous system lesions and cerebrospinal fluid cytology that, in the UK, are generally the provinces of haematologists and neuropathologists. There is also a short section on cervical exfoliative cytology, which is important only in an age range outside that of most paediatric hospitals and usually dealt with by "adult" cytopathologists. These various specialists would find little new in this text.

FNA of lymph nodes has some advantages in paediatric practice, such as evaluating single enlarged nodes where the diagnosis of malignancy is in doubt, or in following response to treatment when a primary tissue diagnosis is established. However, really difficult problems such as lymph node pathology in immunodeficiency syndromes, and the place of FNA (if any), is not covered. Other topics not discussed, including—for example, urine cytology for metachromatic leucodystrophy, dyschromogenic goitre and the differential diagnosis of vacuolated lymphocytes in storage disorders.

I suspect that the sections on childhood tumours will be of most interest. FNA and exfoliative cytopathology clearly have a place here, particularly as the more discriminating techniques such as immunocytochemistry, electron microscopy and chromosomal analysis used in histopathology can also be applied to cytological preparations. However, as the authors emphasise, many factors influencing management and prognosis can only be adequately assessed in tissue sections, and cytopathology is complementary rather than an alternative to biopsy in most cases.

R A RISDON

Diagnostic Microbiology and Cytology of the Eye. Byrne KA, Burd EM, Tabbara KF, Hyndiuk RA. (Pp 199; £45.00.) Butterworth Heinemann. 1995. ISBN 0 7506 9607 9.

The eye is said to be the window of the soul. Unfortunately, this opening to the external environment also affords a window of opportunity for a diverse range of infectious agents, which can take up residency in the various structures comprising the external eye, to cause in many instances, severe morbidity. Other infectious agents can be translocated to the eye from the systemic circulation or can invade the eye, either directly or indirectly, from tissues adjacent to the orbit.

Correct diagnosis of ocular infection, the essential preliminary stage for proper management, can be fraught with difficulty. One example of this is the often misdiagnosed *Acanthamoeba keratitis* being mistaken for herpes simplex, and treated with a drug regimen which is completely inappropriate. Routine medical microbiological testing of corneal scrapes, biopsy specimens and other ocular samples is often inadequate for identi-

fication and culture of eye pathogens, notable examples being *Mycobacterium chelonae* or *Nocardia*. Byrne and colleagues have addressed these matters in a thorough manner. Their offering will be of benefit to those involved in the identification of ocular infections to make them more aware of the many subtle differences in this setting.

Rare ocular infections, often associated with projectiles or puncture injuries, can and do occur, and the microbiologist must be aware of such possibilities. The most appropriate approach to this, and also for identification of more commonly encountered infectious agents of the eye, is close collaboration between ophthalmologists and microbiologists. Professor Tabbara has already provided a formidable tome concerned principally with the clinical and biological aspects of ocular infection. His latest venture, with his American colleagues, will be a valuable complement to his previous work.

The cytological components of this book are somewhat disappointing, comprising only 12 of the 188 pages of text and most of this is devoted to textbook-like descriptions of cells. There is a useful glossary of terms and the text is well indexed and referenced. Disappointing was the absence of an entomology section featuring a key to dipterans and other arthropods associated with ocular disease. The book should be read by those who aspire to expertise in the complex but rewarding speciality of ocular microbiology.

D V SEALE

High-Altitude Medicine and Pathology. 4th edn. Heath D, Williams DR. (Pp 449; 79.50.) Oxford Medical Publications. 1995. ISBN 0-19-262504-7.

The fourth edition of *High-Altitude Medicine and Pathology* marks a change of publisher, typeface and updates in rapidly developing areas of the field. As with previous editions, this is a scholarly work, the bias inevitably lying with the pathology of high altitude illness. In these areas the book is the best available, and reflects the unrivalled expertise and experience of Heath and Williams. The writing is suffused with the infectious enthusiasm shown by Professor Heath in full lecturing flow. Anecdotes and examples litter the text, often adding colour and context to illustrate the point. This stylistic warmth is not overdone, but I prefer text in which the personality of the author is allowed to show through, and this is not to everyone's taste. Warmth is not a characteristic of the rival textbook *High Altitude Medicine and Physiology* by Milledge, Ward and West. Stylistically dryer, but equally authoritative on the physiological aspects of high altitude medicine, this text has also been recently revised in a new edition. A choice between the two texts rests on the subject bias that you prefer—at least, the pathology and physiology biases are clearly in the titles. The pathologists lighten the wallet by an extra £15 compared with their rivals. If your interest is from a pathological perspective, then Heath and Williams is close to ideal. The chapters on topics less familiar to them are well handled, and are useful summaries. Important practical areas such as the treatment of high altitude pulmonary oedema and acute mountain sickness are now well covered. Controversial topics such as the role of pressurisation bags are deftly and cautiously treated, and the preeminence of descent in treatment of altitude illness is well emphasised.

A warm, enthusiastic welcome then to the fourth edition of *High-Altitude Medicine and Pathology*, but remember to glance at the equally competent, differently slanted *High Altitude Medicine and Physiology*, and see if its rather Teutonic chill appeals. An enthusiast's solution is to buy both, although that is £145 of enthusiasm!

D J COLLIER

Notices

FNA Cytology using the Cytospin Method

October 9 1996

Venue: Royal Preston Hospital, UK

This course, costing £60.00 to include coffee, lunch and tea, is aimed at Consultants and trainees, and MLSOs involved in Cytopathology.

For further information, please contact: Dr A J Howat, Department of Histopathology, Royal Preston Hospital, Preston PR2 4HG. (Tel: 01772 710 141; fax: 01772 710 181.)

Australian Institute of Medical Scientists

National Science Meeting

October 6-11 1996

On behalf of the Organising Committee, I extend a warm invitation to all Medical Scientists, Technical Officers and interested parties, to attend the above conference to be held at the Convention Centre in Adelaide, South Australia.

The Conference theme is Aboriginal Health and will cover this and many other related topics and scientific endeavours.

Persons interested in taking part in the scientific program by presenting a paper or poster should contact: Mr John Stirling, c/o Histopathology Department, Finders Medical Centre, Bedford Park, SA 5042.

For further information, please contact: SAPMEA Conventions, 80 Broughams Place, North Adelaide, SA 5006. (Tel: + 618 239 1515; fax: + 618 239 1566.)

Brian Matthews, Chairperson Organising Committee.

The Royal College of Pathologists

presents

One Day Symposium

Pathology and the Media

Thursday 19 September 1996

to be held at

The Royal College of Pathologists,
2 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1

The symposium is open to members of the College, to trainee pathologists and to workers in other disciplines with an interest in the subject. The programme is approved by the Thames Postgraduate Deans and hospital doctors may apply to their employing authority for study leave under HM(67)27.

The registration fee is £75.00 and includes coffee, lunch and tea.

For further information, please contact: Scientific Meetings Officer, The Royal College of Pathologists, 2 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AF.