

## Book reviews

**Oppenheimer's Diagnostic Neuropathology: A Practical Manual.** 2nd edn. Esiri MM. (£125.00.) Blackwell Science. 1996. ISBN 0865429154.

The second edition of this title differs in several important respects from its predecessor, most obviously in the widespread use of colour for both macroscopic and microscopic illustrations. The illustrations have also been expanded by the use of magnetic resonance images (MRI); these are used to particularly good effect in the correlation between anatomy in the fixed brain and MRI brain "slices". The title has been modified to incorporate the name of one of the previous authors who is now deceased but made a lasting contribution to British neuropathology during his distinguished career. The strength of this book lies in the invaluable practical guidance given on all aspects of diagnostic neuropathology, ranging from necropsy techniques, selection of tissues at necropsy, brain inspection and dissection, block selection, staining techniques, and histological interpretation and diagnosis. The text is remarkably comprehensive and is supplemented by useful additional reading lists and by reference to current practical guidelines—for example, for "high risk" necropsy cases. The chapters are arranged in a problem-orientated manner which facilitates use of this book as a diagnostic aid. The use of colour illustrations brings a much greater sense of immediacy to the macroscopic and microscopic images and although not all the colour reproductions are equally successful (some microscopic images are poorly balanced or shaded), the majority are entirely successful. I was pleased to see that the various shorter sections which set this book apart from its predecessor have been retained, in particular the final two chapters on "Associated Malfunctions" which serves as a very useful starting point for the investigation of complex or obscure clinical syndromes, and "Other Matters", the final chapter in which paternal advice is given on relations with clinicians and other pathologists (sometimes a cause of concern for neuropathologists!) and the role of the neuropathologist is discussed.

This well-produced book is a joy for both trainees and experienced neuropathologists to use and everyone I know who purchased the previous edition has kept it close to their working bench. The improved presentation and slightly expanded scope of the second edition justify its production and I would recommend this book not only to neuropathologists but to all pathologists who have to deal with any aspects of diseases involving the nervous system.

J IRONSIDE

**Basic Analytical Toxicology.** Flanagan R, Braithwaite R, Brown S, Widdop B, de Wolff F. (Pp 275; US\$54.00.) World Health Organisation Publications. 1995. ISBN 92 4 154458 9.

This book presents a challenge to all analytical toxicologists and not just to those in developing countries for which it is intended. Simple techniques are described

which need the minimum of specialist equipment that is not always dependent on electricity. Weighing scales and centrifuges are manual, shakers hand driven, test tubes man-sized with eye catching, coloured contents, and everybody will need a Conway spotting plate. In all, a delightful and nostalgic reminder of my school chemistry days in the Lake District. Every toxicological analyst whether practising, quality controlling or prospective should have a copy. Somebody one day might just sneak those techniques into a (electricity free) practical examination!

The book is very easy to use and readable. Practical aspects are covered in the first five chapters. Chapter 6 contains more specific analytical methods for over 100 substances commonly involved in acute toxic incidents. The bibliography, laid out under functional headings, typifies the thought put into helping the user. Other examples are the glossary, compound and reagent reference lists and conversion factors for mass and molar units. General clinical symptoms with suggested reporting forms are provided. The summary of the suggested analytical scheme on p58 justifies a more prominent place as it links many techniques. This apart, it is an excellent manual well suited for its purpose of basic analytical toxicology.

B RUSHTON

**General and Systematic Pathology.** 2nd edn. Underwood JCE, ed. (Pp 944; £35.00.) Churchill Livingstone. 1996. ISBN 0443052824.

The first edition of this book was published in 1992 and quickly became a best-seller in pathology circles and medical schools. It is very popular with teachers and students. A walk down the main corridor in my department confirms that it is widely used by those of us who teach undergraduates in the health care professions. In terms of presentation and style, it was the forerunner of the shaded box and simple line drawings that are now obligatory in all self respecting undergraduate texts. The popularity of *General and Systematic Pathology* as a pathology text is not surprising as it is written with clarity, in a uniform style that is a great tribute to the editor.

In the second edition, there is the same basic organisation into three main sections. The first covers the general nature and causes of disease, the second covers basic disease mechanisms and the third is essentially systemic pathology. The summary panel at the beginning of each section provides a context for the student as well as useful revision points. The clinical relevance of pathology as a subject is alluded to throughout, and there is a high degree of integration between the basic science and clinical signs, symptoms and practice.

The new edition has built on the success of the first and has also been extensively revised and updated. There are three new chapters that cover molecular and environmental causes of disease, diagnostic pathology in clinical practice and ageing and death. The latter, written by Dennis Cotton, is thought provoking and shows how philosophy and science go hand in hand. The editor is unusual in that he has taken account of the changing pace of undergraduate curricula not just in the UK but internationally as well.

I am pleased to have this new edition and have no doubts that it will remain a best-seller. I recommend it to all my students. Priced at £35.00 this book represents excel-

lent value for undergraduates and contains more than enough material to take them through to qualification and beyond.

C DUBOULAY

**Case Studies in General and Systematic Pathology.** Underwood JCE, Cotton DWK, Cross SS, Stephenson TJ. (Pp 178; £15.00.) Churchill Livingstone. 1996. ISBN 0443050961.

Some of the best things come in small packages and this slim volume of case studies is no exception. Between these covers is a treasure trove of material for students. There are 60 case studies that can be used by students on their own or in small groups with or without a tutor. They cover a wide range of topics that integrate pathology with other disciplines and with clinical medicine. The case scenario is set and then the student is presented with a series of questions. The explanations and answers are given in an adjacent shaded panel that can be covered and then revealed. Revision boxes at the end of each case refer the student to further reading.

Pathology is one of the core disciplines that informs clinical medicine. Students tend to learn best when they are stimulated and can see the relevance of their studies. Pathology learnt in isolation can be boring and tedious but it comes to life when presented in a clinical context. Add to this a format that encourages hypothesis testing, reasoning and problem solving and you have the perfect recipe for deep, effective learning.

This book is primarily designed as a companion to Underwood's *General and Systemic Pathology*. However, I think it may equally stand alone as resource material for students and teachers alike on which to base their learning and teaching. At £15.00, it is an essential buy for any student, regardless of whether or not their medical school has an integrated curriculum.

C DUBOULAY

**Biopsy Pathology of the Oesophagus, Stomach and Duodenum.** 2nd edn. Day DW, Dixon MF. (£100.00.) Chapman and Hall. 1995. ISBN 0 412 63570 4.

For me, Chapman and Hall's *Biopsy Pathology* series has been a little variable, particularly when using these books for pathological diagnosis. This title is unequivocally one of the very best ones. The second edition is much improved by the addition of the UK's top gastrointestinal pathologist, Dr Dixon, as a fellow author to the original single author, Dr Day. Together they have produced an excellent reference book to upper gastrointestinal tract pathology. How has the book changed since its first edition nine years ago? It has been enriched by some excellent additions, particularly on gastritis, gastric lymphoma, upper GI cytology, and AIDS pathology in the upper tract, the latter two by acknowledged experts in the field, Drs Hussain and Francis. The photography is excellent and there are many fine colour plates. Nine years ago, there was no mention of the word helicobacter and yet helicobacter related pathology is, obviously, a major part of this book. It is incredible to see the change that a single decade has wrought to upper gastrointestinal tract pathology.

The text is succinctly divided into sections on each of the three major organs except for unifying pathologies such as vascular lesions,

iatrogenic pathology and conditions which are non-site specific. Are there any negatives? Well, one could point to a few typographical errors (such as multiple lymphomatoid polyposis) and argue that one of the most troublesome areas of diagnostic pathology, the assessment of dysplasia in Barrett's oesophagus, is only illustrated by unequivocal dysplasia and there are no illustrations of difficult reactive/indefinite examples. Equally, one could say that the book is not quite up to date in terms of the relative incidence of primary oesophageal malignancies. A 1973 survey is quoted stating that 93% of all malignancies in the oesophagus are of squamous type, whereas most agree that squamous cell carcinoma and adenocarcinoma of the oesophagus are now equally prevalent. These are but minor quibbles and they should not detract from what is an excellent text of upper gastrointestinal tract pathology. I would recommend this as a compulsory read for all practising and trainee pathologists and gastroenterologists, particularly the sections on gastritis, helicobacter disease and AIDS.

N A SHEPHERD

## Notices

Clinical Pathology Accreditation  
(UK) Ltd Annual Conference

### Changing Traditional Roles in Pathology Services

Wednesday March 12 1997

Venue: Royal College of Physicians, 11 St Andrew's Place, London NW1 4LE (by kind permission of the Treasurer)

With the evolution of technology and the volatile environment in public and independent health services, traditional professional roles in pathology are shifting. Some welcome this, some accept it and others see it as a treat to standards. This conference will provide a platform for a diversity of views and will try to see if any consensus can be achieved. Points will be revisited at the end of the afternoon in a summing up session.

CPA will be breaking new ground this year by inviting free communications on the above theme for the afternoon session. Abstracts are now solicited and further information is available from the CPA central office.

Chairman: Morning session  
Brian Edwards (Chairman CPA)

Afternoon session  
John Lilleyman (Chief Executive CPA)

Registration fee: £90 (to include coffee, lunch and tea).

The Conference will be submitted for CPD and CME points.

For further information, please contact: CPA Central Office, 45 Rutland Park, Sheffield S10 2PB (tel: 0114 268 6151; fax: 0114 268 6251).

### UK NEQAS for Blood Coagulation: Participants Meeting

March 12 1997

Venue: Octagon Centre, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TQ

A one-day meeting has been organised for participants and interested observers of the UK National External Quality Assurance Scheme for Blood Coagulation.

Invited speakers include Professor PM Mannucci, Milan, Italy; Professor M Greaves, Aberdeen; Professor GDO Lowe, Glasgow; Dr T Baglin, Cambridge; and Dr I Mackie, London. Subjects to be discussed encompass the diagnosis and management of thrombophilia, heparin-induced thrombocytopenia and thrombosis, the prediction of arterial thrombosis with thrombotic tests, near patient testing instrumentation. The topics of plasma calibrants in the prothrombin time for anticoagulant control, external quality assessment (EQA) of heparin dosage monitoring, and EQA of near patient testing systems will be discussed by Mr S Kitchen, Mr I Jennings, and Mr TAL Woods of UK NEQAS for Blood Coagulation. Opportunity will be given for open discussion.

Applications have been made for the meeting to be approved by the Royal College of Pathologists for CME and for accreditation in the Institute of Biomedical Sciences Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme.

For further details, please contact: Mr TAL Woods, Scheme Manager, UK NEQAS for Blood Coagulation, 305 Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TJ (tel: 0114 270 0862; fax: 0114 275 8989).

### Diagnostic Medical Mycology

April 7-11 1997

A one-week lecture and practical course on the laboratory diagnosis of fungal infections will be held in Leeds, commencing 7 April 1997. This established course is intended for MLSOs and medical graduates working in diagnostic laboratories and is organised by the British Society for Medical Mycology. The course has been awarded 5.4 credits for members of the Institute of Biomedical Science who are registered on the CPD Diploma scheme and 30 CME credits for medical staff and clinical scientists in career grade posts who are enrolled with one of the Royal Colleges for CME purposes.

Course fee (excluding accommodation) is £340.00 + VAT (reduction for BSMM and IBMS members).

For further details, please contact: Professor EGV Evans, PHLS Mycology Reference Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT.

British Society for Clinical Cytology  
5th Annual Tutorial

### Cytopathology of the Urinary Tract and Retroperitoneum

March 21 and 22 1997

Venue: The Royal London Medical College, Whitechapel, London E1 1BB

Speakers:  
Professor LG Koss  
(Albert Einstein College of Medicine,  
New York)

Dr E McGoogan

Dr A Al-Nafussi  
(University of Edinburgh)

Dr W Gray  
(John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford)

Dr G McKee  
(Royal Surrey County Hospital,  
Guildford)

Lectures, case presentations, workshops

Registration fee £80; workshops £20 each.

CME Approved.

Application forms from BSCC Office, Dawley Road, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 1HH (tel: 0181 606 2511; fax: 0181 606 2563).

### Postgraduate Course in Urological Surgical Pathology

May 16-18 1997

The Department of Pathology, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), Harvard Medical School (HMS) will present a three-day postgraduate course in Urological Surgical Pathology under the direction of Dr Robert H Young with additional MGH HMS faculty of Dr Robert E Scully and guest faculty of Dr Mahul Amin (Henry Ford Hospital), Dr David G Bostwick (Mayo Clinic) and John N Eble (Indiana University).

The objective of this course is to provide a comprehensive review of urological surgical pathology with special attention paid to recent advances and newly recognised entities. Instruction will be primarily by lecture but will also include discussion periods. Participants will have the opportunity to review glass slides of selected unusual cases in the laboratories of the Massachusetts General Hospital during the evenings. Each participant will receive a complete course syllabus.

The course has category I accreditation for 23 hours CME credit by the American Medical Association. The fee for the course is \$550.00 (£331.00) (residents and fellows \$390.00 (£235.00)).

For further information, please contact: Department of Continuing Medical Education, Harvard Medical School, 25 Shattuck Street, Boston, MA 02115, USA (tel: 617 432 1525; fax: 617 432 1562).