BOOK REVIEWS

Grundriss der pathologischen Anatomie und Histologie der weiblichen Geschlechtsorgane. By Viktor Dubrausky. (Pp. 347; 285 figures. D.M. 84) Munich: Johann Ambrosius Barth. 1954.

German medical literature is famous for its exhaustive, voluminous handbooks on all specialities; but the practical pathologist cannot always consult a handbook. So far, no concise textbook in the German language on the pathology of the female genital organs has been available. Some German pathologists (and gynaecologists), with a reading knowledge of English, have been using Emil Novak's well-known work. Dubrausky's *Grundriss* is the first attempt in recent years to fill this gap.

The author, according to a preface by Prof. K. Burger of Wurzburg, has been trained in both gynaecology and morbid anatomy and has a long experience of the subject on which he is writing, treating it with German thoroughness. The approach is that of a systematic pathologist rather than of a clinician. Organ after organ is subjected to the familiar pattern of textbooks of morbid anatomy, viz., normal anatomy and histology, disorders of circulation, inflammations, degenerative changes, non-neoplastic hyperplasias and, finally, tumours. Hormonal changes of the endometrium and menstrual disorders are treated in a separate chapter, as they do not fit readily into this classification. Pathological changes of a venereal aetiology are included and so are dermatological lesions of the vulva; no account is given of the pathology of the breast.

The author succeeds in his endeavour to accommodate the maximum of information into a minimum of space. The inevitable effect is a loss of fluency in the presentation. Occasionally the text freezes into a mere enumeration of pathological conditions instead of a discussion. The style is dry and uninspiring (so different from Novak's!). This is a serious drawback for a student, who may have to read through the book, but is less serious for the pathologist who uses it for purposes of references; and it need not deter the foreign reader with only a limited knowledge of German. I have not come across any of those incomprehensible long and involved sentences dreaded by English readers. Unfortunately, there is a tendency to replace easily understood international terms by vernacular ones. Unless the reader is quite familiar with German usage, he may not guess that "Verkrebsung" means carcinomatous change. Even where terms of Latin or Greek derivation are retained, they masquerade in a new German spelling, e.g. Karzinom for carcinom.

There is a wealth of well-selected photographs. Most of these are technically excellent and show clearly the essential features of the lesion. In one or two instances the reader may not be convinced of

the author's diagnosis by the photographic evidence presented, but this is almost inevitable and should not detract from the great value of the photographic material. Magnifications are not specified.

The book is particularly useful for the specialist and research worker, thanks to an extensive survey of the literature. Most of the papers referred to have been published in German periodicals, but an attempt is made to be more cosmopolitan and a fair number of British and American publications are included. The list of surveyed literature is found in an appendix at the end of the book and is arranged by numbers corresponding to reference numbers in the text. Each number covers a group of papers on the same subject. Neither the theme nor the titles of the individual papers are given. It might help if in a future edition a heading indicating the theme, at least, were added to each group number in the appendix.

The standard of production is comparable to that of British medical textbooks. There is a marked eagerness to economize in space. Even so, the price works out at more than £7. No criticism, however adverse, could be a greater deterrent.

H. G. KOHLER.

An Outline of the Cytology and Pathology of the Reticular Tissue. By A. H. E. Marshall, with a chapter on the Lipidoses by J. B. Cavanagh. (Pp. x+274; 116 figures. 42s.) Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd. 1956.

The study of the reticular tissue—a term which includes lymphoid, myeloid, and reticulo-endothelial tissues—covers one of the most difficult and controversial subjects in pathology. It is a vast and rapidly expanding field to which contributions have been made by workers in many branches of medicine. Dr. Marshall's intention is to provide an introduction.

The emphasis throughout is on the elucidation of disease processes found in man. To this end much information has been assembled from clinical, pathological, and experimental work. After a description of the normal structure and function of the reticular tissue there is a detailed survey of its hyperplasia and neoplasia. Particular attention is paid to classification, and an individual account of many of these disease processes is given, though, as the author himself points out, considerable selection in the choice of subject matter has been exercised.

There are interesting sections on the response of reticular tissue to endocrine and antigenic stimuli. New light is shed on the reticulo-endothelial system and its relation to microglia by Dr. Marshall's own work on metalophil cells, a system of cells demonstrable by metallic impregnation methods. The chapter on the classification of hyperplastic and