Books received

Clinical Tests of Gastric Secretion. History, Methodology and Interpretation. By J. H. BARON. Pp. x+277, illustrated. Macmillan Press, London, 1980. £12.50.

The District Administrator in the National Health Service. By ROSEMARY STEWART, PETER SMITH, JENNY BLAKE and PAULINE WINGATE. Pp. 211. King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, London, 1980. £7.50.

Book reviews

Clinics in Haematology (Vol. 9, No. 1, Feb. 1980) **Cytogenetics and Haematology**

Edited by D. G. PENINGTON. Pp. viii + 224, illustrated. W. B. Saunders, London, Philadelphia and Toronto, 1980. £9.00.

Professor D. G. Penington has selected a group of contributors who have been able to present a balanced picture of the cytogeneticist's contribution to the investigation of haematological malignancies.

The book is easily understood by a non-specialist because the opening chapter describes the nomenclature and includes a glossary of terms and the second chapter describes the different techniques used in chromosome identification. Whilst admitting that all the major discoveries were made using simple techniques the authors point out that the banding techniques which have been developed since 1969 have enabled cytogeneticists to define individual chromosomes more precisely. Some of these techniques are time-consuming and some are expensive but it is apparent that their value as diagnostic aids in clinical cytogenetics is increasing.

The remaining chapters of the book are descriptions of chromosomal abnormalities in different groups of haematological malignancies. Several chapters are devoted to the cytogenetic changes found in the leukaemias. The problem of the Philadelphia chromosome in acute leukaemia is discussed but still seems a little confused. Although there is no clear-cut marker chromosome in leukaemias other than chronic granulocytic it is interesting to learn from work on the refractory anaemias that there is an association between deletion of the long arm of chromosome 5 and abnormalities of erythropoiesis. Studies of the same group of disorders have shown that those patients with pre-leukaemia are much more likely to have an abnormal karyotype than those with chronic cytopenia or sideroblastic anaemia.

The chapter on the lymphomas demonstrates that although simple staining techniques can be used to show that chromosome abnormalities are very common, banding techniques are necessary to demonstrate that the long arm of chromosome 14 frequently has additional material.

The last chapter summarizes all the information available and emphasizes that only 11 or 12 of the 26 pairs of chromosomes are ever involved in human neoplasms and includes a table demonstrating those chromosomes which are involved most commonly in different tumours.

The information included in the book is fascinating but leaves the feeling that one is only standing on the threshold of this area of investigation and that there is very much more to learn. The book will be of particular interest and value to haematologists and oncologists.

A Colour Atlas of Diabetes

By A. BLOOM and J. IRELAND. Pp. 119, illustrated. Wolfe Medical Publications, London, 1980. £15.00.

Some diseases are more visual than others – diabetes, you might think, is not. Drs Bloom and Ireland show in this volume that you would be wrong. They have chosen every possible aspect of diabetes to illustrate this with some splendid photographs. These 2 distinguished physicians have missed nothing, as far as I can see, and they have clearly taken a lot of trouble in their selection. Their book will be valuable for teaching – especially for showing students on a short medical attachment what necrobiosis, retinal exudates or rubeosis iridis look like and teaching them will therefore find the book very useful. The cost is understandable in view of the very high quality of the reproductions. Some of the photographs are repetitious (e.g. of insulin fat atrophy) and some uninformative (e.g. patient unconscious from hypoglycaemia) but these are minor criticisms of an enterprising venture.

Family Care of Old People

By TIM DARTINGTON. Pp. 157. Human Horizons Series. Souvenir Press, London, 1980. £5.95 (paperback £3.95).

This is a very readable and enjoyable book explaining simply the problems of advancing age. Mr Darrington's obvious love and empathy for the elderly clearly shows through in his writing. He has an appreciation not only of the problems of the ageing citizen, but also of those relatives, friends and the 'caring professions' involved with the maintenance of the elderly in the community.

The advice offered is of a very practical nature, and may offer much to relieve the anxiety and helplessness of relatives who find themselves burdened with an incontinent, confused, difficult old person. Knowing where, and how to turn for help is important. This book is recommended reading for all families who have the responsibility of looking after an ageing relative.

The Mast Cell. Its Role in Health and Disease.

Edited by J. PEPYS and A. M. EDWARDS. Proceedings of an International Symposium Davos, Switzerland. Pp. 873, illustrated. Pitman Medical, Tunbridge Wells, 1979. £16.50.

The mast cell has remained an enigma for many years. Its definition, structure, chemical characteristics, and role in health and disease have all been matters for debate. This book forms the published proceedings of a recent international symposium devoted to the subject. The contributors

represent a full range of workers in this field, both scientists and practising clinicians. Their individual papers are presented, a few of these discuss current concepts in a review format, but most report individual research work with a marked clinical bias. Discussion from the floor of the meetings is also recorded.

The first section is concerned with the structure and function of the cells themselves, involving a discussion of the chemical nature of their contents and their importance in hypersensitivity reactions and in the regulation of connective tissue function. A small series of papers on the mode of action of sodium cromoglycate follows and the bulk of the volume is then devoted to sections on the role of the mast cell in respiratory disease, food allergy, eye, skin and ear, nose and throat diseases, and in inflammatory bowel disorders. Each of these parts contains papers on the relationship of mast cells to pathogenesis, making a diagnosis of an allergic disorder and the place of elimination diets and drug therapy in management. Inevitably there is repetition but this is not a book which will be read from cover to cover. The clinician in the relevant field will find much to note if he is prepared to move from paper to paper, scanning the speculations arising from the basic scientific work with interest. The book is well presented and contains an unusually extensive index which is, unfortunately, not always accurate. The proceedings have been published with commendable speed and represent a unique record of current work. References abound and the clear type is well supported by large figures, diagrams, black and white and colour plates. Although basically a reference work, it is a record of a meeting where the impact of basic knowledge on the clinical diagnosis and management of allergy was emphasized and as such it will have an appeal to a wide audience.

The Tuberculin Test in Clinical Practice. An illustrated guide.

By MAXWELL CAPLIN. Pp. xi+84, illustrated. Baillière Tindall, London, 1980. Paperback £5.75.

This must surely be the most comprehensive and exhaustive review of the tuberculin test and, since it is beautifully written, it must also be the most readable. Following the historical introduction, there are chapters on the Mantoux, Heaf and Tine tests; false-negative and -positive reactions; and its value in epidemiology, chemoprophylaxis, in tuberculosis and other conditions.

This account is written from the viewpoint of a chest physician interested in tuberculosis, and as such it is a splendid review of the subject. What a pity that he is not interested in immunology and the thymus-mediated T cells, for the tuberculin test is nowadays a bedside skin test for poor cellular immunity. The author devotes only 9 lines to cancer, which deserves a chapter on its own. The index does not mention levamisole, which is a potent stimulator of the T cells responsible for tuberculin hypersensitivity. But all of this will surely appear in the second edition. This edition is for the Third World, but the author must be persuaded to

bring us up to date for the Fourth World. This test is too important to be abandoned at this stage of its evolution. Dr W. F. Wheeler, like the author, must also be congratulated for the most elegant illustrations.

Progress in Geriatric Day Care

By J. C. BROCKLEHURST and J. S. TUCKER. Pp. 204. King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, London, 1980. £7.00.

This is a very comprehensive review of all aspects of geriatric day hospitals. The book is readable and interesting, opening with an outline of the literature, and history of day hospitals, and proceeding with accounts of the work-load encountered, policies, attitudes of patients, staff and relatives, design of Units, problems of transport, and costs. The benefits and disadvantages of day hospitals are carefully discussed with advice and very practical suggestions. This book is essential reading for all physicians responsible for planning or running a day hospital for the elderly.

Psychopathology – its Causes and Symptoms

By F. KRAUPL TAYLOR. Revised edition. Pp. ix+362. Quartermaine House, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex, 1979. £9.50 (cloth) £5.50 (paper).

This is the revised edition of a book first published in 1966. The cover is somewhat deceptive in that it gives the appearance of being 'heavy' but this is a good example of the old adage, 'Never judge a book by its cover'. The back cover states, 'The book will appeal not only to students and workers in the realm of psychiatry, psychology and social work, but also to the informed layman'. This is likely to be quite true. The reviewer would certainly recommend this book to undergraduates and postgraduates.

There are 4 parts, the last of which is entitled 'Recent Developments' and includes chapters on genetics, the XYY syndrome, PKU and pseudo-hallucinations, which are interesting and somewhat surprising topics for such a book. It is very good value for money.

Topical Steroid Treatment for Asthma and Rhinitis

Edited by N. MYGIND and T. J. H. CLARK. Pp. x+188, illustrated. Baillière Tindall, London, 1980. £9.50.

What an interesting fusion of Danish and British editorship, with contributions by experts from Canada (14), United Kingdom (7), Sweden (3), and one apiece from Denmark, Israel and Japan! This book has been written for clinicians who need a substantial review of topical steroid therapy in asthma and rhinitis. The greater part of this book concerns beclomethasone dipropionate, but other topical corticosteroids are also mentioned. It is a mine of information for chest physicians, allergists, immunologists, ear nose and throat surgeons, and paediatricians.