acquired' could also be taken as a comment on the whole volume.

I am sure this book deserves a place in the library of most clinicians dealing with back pain.

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Principles and Practice of Virology, edited by A.J. Zuckerman, J.E. Banatvala and J.R. Pattison. Pp. ix + 590, illustrated. John Wiley, Chichester, New York, Brisbane, Toronto and Singapore, 1987. £58.00.

With unsuspected new viruses being reported steadily as the years go by, with new evidence linking viruses to the induction of human cancer, and with the AIDS epidemic presenting mankind with a problem of unprecedented gravity, any new book on clinical virology is to be welcomed. The present volume consists of sixteen chapters, each by a separate author or authors expert in a particular field and ranges across the entire spectrum of viruses which infect man from the alphaviruses right through to zoster virus.

The content of the different chapters varies from those dealing with a particular virus family, herpesviruses, enteroviruses, or poxviruses, to those dealing with agents causing particular clinical manifestations such as acute diarrhoeal diseases or respiratory tract infections. Yet other chapters are concerned with a single disease such as measles, rubella, rabies and so on. This lack of a standard pattern of treatment has led to a certain absence of uniform organization of material which make orientation difficult and the search for a particular type of information rather confusing. Thus, the busy hospital microbiologist may find considerable difficulty in unearthing the indications for abortion during primary CMV infection in the first three months of pregnancy which is hidden away in the text although mentioned in the index, whilst the rarity or otherwise of congenital varicella infection is not mentioned nor is the severity of infection with this virus during pregnancy. Certainly the British PHLS guidelines on this condition regard it as a problem and unlike the present book recommend the administration of zoster-immune globulin.

As with any multi-author compilation, the different contributions vary considerably in usefulness. The general standard is refreshingly high but there are nevertheless certain quite outstandingly good sections such as that on hepatitis viruses by Zuckerman himself and papovaviruses by McCance and Gardner. In contrast one or two of the chapters are less than helpful.

If the editors had insisted on applying the excellent organization of the best chapters throughout the book the volume would have been much improved. It would also have been improved by more rigorous editing than appears to have been the case. Abbreviations are introduced without explanation or with explanations on some subsequent page and certain gross errors have been allowed to slip through. The Lucké virus is not a virus from toads but from the North American leopard frog, the Epstein-Barr virus was not discovered by Pulvertaft, and the chapter on human slow

infections is marred by the bland assumption that the so-called prion protein is responsible for the causation of the central nervous system diseases of this type.

Nevertheless, the value of this book is considerable and its appearance at this time of major progress in virology is to be welcomed. It will be a valuable and up-to-date addition to the reference texts available to the clinical virologist in the AIDS-troubled times ahead.

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Renal Transplantation, edited by Marvin R. Garovoy and Ronald D. Guttman. Pp. xiv + 446, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1986. £47.50.

After nearly 30 years, the practice of renal transplantation has now come of age. It is only fitting that an experimental procedure has become an art, and the multidisciplinary nature of this art has necessarily meant that no one person could be expected to master the many facets of the practice of transplantation.

In producing this book, the editors have gathered a representative array of experts who have set about producing in simple but comprehensive form, a very readable manual. All the contributors are from the United States of America and Canada, and this reflects in the terminology that is used. This however does not detract from its use in international transplant circles. Indeed, although there is controversy on many aspects of renal transplantation, these have all been properly reflected by the different authors in their presentations. The editors have, in the space of 446 pages and 15 chapters, taken the readers through the procedures that one may meet and practice in looking after patients in end-state renal failure. The early chapters bring home the fact that dialysis and transplantation are complementary forms of therapy and, indeed the whole basis of selection and preparation of patients for either form of treatment is well documented. It is fitting that the chapters on 'Immunosuppression Following Transplantation' should actually precede that of 'The Surgical Aspects of Renal Transplantation' and 'The Diagnosis and Management of Rejection'. The authors of this section have in fact delved not only into the historical aspects of immunosuppression, but highlighted the recent developments, especially in relation to monoclonal antibodies and total lymph node irradiation. A very comprehensive discussion relates to the use of cyclosporin, azathioprine, and prednisolone. I was pleased to note that there is a section relating to the individual variability and individualisation of therapy in management.

The surgical aspects of kidney transplantation occupy about 30 pages. In this space the authors have managed to compress not only all aspects of surgical technique and peri-operative evaluation and care, but indeed mention some of the complications that can occur. I found the diagrams relating to the surgical techniques somewhat inadequate. The authors compensate with an extremely comprehensive bibliography in this chapter. The prime complication of the practice of transplantation is rejection and this has adequate