

Clinics in Haematology, Vol. 8, No. 2. Cellular Dynamics of Haemopoiesis

Edited by L. G. LAJTHA. Pp. viii + 310, illustrated. W. B. Saunders, London, Philadelphia and Toronto, 1979. £8.25. Medical research often advances in great surges. We seem to be past such a surge in immunology. On the other hand, we are clearly on the upward slope of activity in relation to haemopoietic stem cells and hence this volume of *Clinics in Haematology* entitled *Cellular Dynamics of Haemopoiesis* is very timely.

The book is directed more to the scientist than the physician and will be of most use to research workers in this exciting area. The field is still dominated by problems of methodology and this is discussed in relation to the different cell lines.

Sections deal with pluripotent stem cells, genetic anaemias in mice, granulocyte-monocyte precursors as assessed in semi-agar culture, regulation of granulopoiesis, erythroid stem cells in relation to human disease, erythroid and granulocytic kinetics, megakaryocytopoiesis, lymphopoiesis, surface markers and cell sorters, haemopoietic regulation and leukaemic cells. Some sections may not be easy to read other than by those engaged in the field; and those who, like the reviewer, look for an idiot's guide to stem cells and their regulation, had better start with a simpler description of events before graduating to this more advanced volume.

A Colour Atlas of Gynaecological Surgery. Vol. 3: Operations for Malignant Disease

By DAVID H. LEES AND ALBERT SINGER. Pp. 352, illustrated. Wolfe Medical Publications, London, 1979. £33.

This volume, like its predecessors, provides a detailed step-by-step photographic account of operations, the colour photographs being accompanied by a concise written commentary. The colour photographs are of a high quality with anatomical details highlighted by the use of indicators and line diagrams. The visual resolution achieved by the photographs of intra-pelvic operations is perhaps not quite as high as that in the case of vulval operations, but could probably not be improved on except by the use of stereoscopic photography.

There are separate chapters covering the surgical treatment of carcinoma of the vulva; cervical carcinoma; uterine carcinoma; ovarian carcinoma and recurrent pelvic malignancy; as well as a chapter reviewing the radiation therapy of gynaecological cancer. The chapters on carcinoma of the vulva and cervix have useful introductory sections on the applied anatomy of the region, and also describe the role of lymphography in the pre-operative work-up of these conditions. It is therefore a little surprising that the authors' criteria for performing a radical vulvectomy as distinct from a radical vulvectomy with pelvic lymphadenectomy, seem to be based on slightly arbitrary clinical criteria without apparently taking the extent of lymphatic spread into consideration. However, this is only a minor criticism of a beautifully produced book which trainee specialists in gynaecology will find extremely useful to prepare them for and to supplement what they will learn from their teachers in the operating theatre.

The Control of Chronic Pain

By SAMPSON LIPTON. Current Topics in Anaesthesia Series. Edited by S. A. Feldman and C. F. Scurr, No. 2. Pp. x + 134, illustrated. Edward Arnold, London, 1979. £7.95.

Advances in anaesthesia, as in so many other fields in medicine, are proceeding at such a rate that it is difficult even for the specialist to select and retrieve information from this enormously enlarging pool of knowledge. Moreover, in an acute speciality such as anaesthesia, failure to keep abreast of such advances can seriously affect the standard of patient

care. This volume is the second in a new series entitled *Current Topics in Anaesthesia* under the general editorship of Stanley Feldman and Cyril Scurr which aims to provide a solution to this problem. We are promised a selection of topics where there is a particular need for a clear digest and considered evaluation of current information. Already the first volume on intravenous anaesthetic agents has appeared and other titles will include neuroanaesthesia and medical problems and the anaesthetist.

Dr Lipton is particularly well qualified as author of this book since he is Director of the Centre for Pain Relief at the Walton Hospital, Liverpool, and is well known for his contributions to this subject. In this short volume he outlines the physiology and pharmacology of pain and discusses the organization of pain relief clinics. He stresses, by the way, the importance of including the word 'relief' in the title of such a Unit. He then considers specific chronic painful problems—headaches, rheumatic conditions and cancer. Treatment includes wide choice of modalities and Dr Lipton's descriptions range over the use of drugs, electric neuromodulation, acupuncture, hypnosis, percutaneous cordotomy, pituitary injection of alcohol and a wide variety of nerve blocks. The chapters are brief so that the whole book can be read in an evening, but they do give an invaluable over-view of the subject. Certainly the technical details and diagrams given for some of the more elaborate treatments would be insufficient to enable a tiro to carry them out without further help. However, there are extensive references for additional reading and the interested anaesthetist would be well advised to see the expert at work.

It is surprising that more is not being done to try to relieve the enormous burden which chronic incurable pain presents to patients. As the author states in his preface 'it is amazing to realise that only in recent years has the idea arisen of treating pain as an entity when the underlying medical condition cannot be cured'. Certainly anaesthetists have an important part to play in what is rapidly becoming an important new speciality and this volume serves as an excellent introduction to an important subject.

100 Data Interpretation Questions for the MRCP

By RICHARD ASHFORD AND PATRICK VENABLES. Pp. 200, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London and New York, 1979. £2.95 (paperback).

This little book provides practice in laboratory data interpretation for the general Membership candidate. There is a good balance of the various disciplines with electrocardiograms, lung function, haematology and strictly chemical pathology data represented. The answers are short and specific and therein lies the weakness of this book. Although the authors in their introduction state it is not their aim to 'be a textbook' the reader receives little guidance when he is 'wrong' nor do the authors provide reassurance that their answers are indeed correct by referencing them. Nearly all the practice question books suffer from this fault. This criticism notwithstanding, this book is a worthwhile addition to the exam candidate's 'bank'.

Epidemiology for the Uninitiated

By G. ROSE AND D. J. P. BARKER. Pp. 59. Articles published by the British Medical Journal, British Medical Association, London, 1979. £2.50 (paperback).

Epidemiology, the study of disease in relation to populations, has rightly become of increasing importance. Although excellent publications on the subject already exist, many have been deterred by the sophistry of their arguments and the complexity of the statistical techniques which they imply. This book seeks to remedy the situation by addressing itself to the 'uninitiated'. It is based on articles by two distinguished epidemiologists which were commissioned by the British Medical Journal and are now presented in book form. It