

matters but the bulk of the volume is devoted to correlations between clinical aspects and histology.

The section by Sherman dealing with differentiation during embryogenesis evokes some important and fundamental issues which sit somewhat uneasily in this largely practical manual. Franzen summarizes his considerable experience with aspiration biopsy, a technique which is perhaps worthy of more widespread adoption. There is an interesting presentation by Casarett and his colleagues describing a quantitative histological approach to radiosensitivity and response which does attempt to get to grips with the problem of providing an objective histological measure of therapeutic response.

In the clinical section there are two chapters on the prognostic significance of histological grade in breast cancer. The first by Hutter discusses the general aspects of pathology in relation to prognosis, and the second by Bloom describes in some detail his well-known earlier studies on tumour grading in breast tumours in relation to patient survival. The clinical section, which also deals with histology in relation to lung, bladder, and prostatic cancer, describes the current position in Hodgkin's disease where it is of considerable interest that the prognostic significance of the histological sub-type appears to be changing so that the distinction between nodular sclerosis and mixed cellularity may be less important than was previously thought. This emphasizes an important consideration in the identification of prognostically significant features in any human malignancy, namely, that with changing investigative and therapeutic attitudes features which once significantly determined prognosis may no longer do so.

With the reservations expressed above, this latest edition of the excellent series of *Frontiers of Radiation Therapy and Oncology* maintains the high standard set by the previous volumes and will be of interest and value to both pathologists and clinicians working in the cancer field.

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**Laboratory Instrumentation.** Edited by R. Hicks, J. R. Schenken, and Mary Ann Steinrauf. (Pp. 237; 135 figs; \$9.95.) London, Maryland, New York, San Francisco: Harper and Row. 1974.

The authors' intention is to attempt to bridge the gap between the larger textbooks on theory and the manufacturers'

instrument manuals. It was developed for use as an instructional course manual by the faculty of medical technology of a United States university.

The book is divided into 18 sections; the first deals with the elementary principles of electricity in 20 pages. Other subjects covered are spectrophotometry, pH + blood gas analysis, osmometry, refractometry, scintillation counting, gas-liquid chromatography, the Coulter A, B, Fn + S, the Technicon Autoanalyzer, balances, diluters, and centrifuges.

Each section starts with a glossary of definitions which is followed by an explanation of instrument components and how they are incorporated in a typical instrument. Each chapter includes its own set of references.

No attempt is made to compare different makes of instrument. The preface states that mention of a specific instrument is not an endorsement of the instrument nor is failure to mention a particular instrument an indication of inferiority or unacceptability.

The authors have of necessity had to be selective but there are some important omissions. No mention is made of rate reaction analysers, discrete analysers such as the Vickers multi and dual channel machines or specific glucose analysers, and only four pages are devoted to fluorimetry, whereas refractometry is allocated 14 pages. A glossary of abbreviations is provided at the beginning of the book, which is useful except that the abbreviation for aspartate amino transferase is given as S.G.O.T!

A section giving some guidance on how to check the validity of makers' claims of performance would be useful.

Despite these criticisms, the book is well produced, easy to use, and well illustrated with simple line drawings.

I think this book should be of value to those studying for HNC and the Advanced Final of the IMLT, the MCB, MRC Path in clinical chemistry, and wherever a basic knowledge of the principles of operation of instruments used in the medical laboratory is required.

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## Errata

In Antibiotic-disc tests for rapid identification of non-sporing anaerobes by Susan Peach (*J. clin. Path.*, 1975, **28**, 388-391) the results shown in table II regarding the susceptibility of *B. fragilis* to rifampicin have been printed the wrong way round. Instead of:

Rifampicin 15 µg	
R 100	97.5
S —	2.5
Intermediate—	—

the table should read:

Rifampicin 15 µg	
R —	2.5
S 100	97.5
Intermediate—	—

In An experimental comparison of Thiol broth with Brewer's thioglycollate for anaerobic blood cultures by D. C. Shanson and M. Barnicoat (*J. clin. Path.*, 1975, **28**, 407-409) there was an error in the table. *B. melaninogenicus* strain NCTC 9337 should have appeared with a 0 in the 24 hr column, with Southern Group Brewer's medium, instead of the + shown.