

Book reviews

Immunobiology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. Edited by G. F. Brooks, E. C. Gotschlich, K. K. Holmes, W. D. Sawyer, and F. E. Young, 1978. Pp. 422. American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC (\$15).

The last 10 years have seen an enormous research effort aimed at understanding the biology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and how the gonococcus interacts with its unique natural host, man. In January 1978 a conference was held in San Francisco to review our current understanding of this organism and to assess future prospects for the control of gonorrhoea.

This book contains the proceedings of the San Francisco meeting and comprises some 70 papers by leading investigators in the field of gonococcal research. The contents are grouped under six main headings.

The first section contains papers on the physiology, genetics, and antimicrobial susceptibility of the gonococcus and on gonococcal β -lactamases. The second section reviews the surface structures of the gonococcus with respect to their role as cellular antigens. The possibility that gonococcal pili protein may be a useful candidate for a vaccine is discussed in some detail by Brinton and his colleagues. The next two sections are concerned with 'Pathogenicity and Immunity' and 'Immunity and Vaccine' and deal with the host-parasite relationship *in vivo* and animal models of gonococcal infection.

The fifth section, 'Current Concepts and Future Strategies', is a mixture of topics and includes papers on the various

immunological tests which are presently being evaluated for the serodiagnosis of gonorrhoea. The final section, by John Robbins, considers whether a vaccine for gonorrhoea is a realistic possibility.

At the end of each section is a discussion summary which contains comments and ideas from the participants at the conference. Although some papers contain little descriptive methodology, the reader is directed to the list of references at the end of each paper.

The editors are to be congratulated for the rapid publication of this book, which serves as an excellent review of the current status of gonococcal research and a rich source of references to original papers on *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. It will be of great value to both clinical and non-medical scientists interested in gonococcal research and is to be recommended to all workers interested in the host-parasite relationship in infectious diseases.

P. R. Lambden

Manual of Dermatologic Therapeutics With Essentials of Diagnosis. Kenneth A. Arndt, 1978. Second edition, pp. 337. Little, Brown and Company (Inc.), Massachusetts (\$10.95).

This paperback deals with disorders of the skin seen in ambulatory patients. It is divided into three parts. The first part defines the skin disorders and discusses their aetiology, diagnosis, and treatment. It includes 17 colour photographs of high

quality. The second part outlines common outpatient operative procedures and diagnostic and therapeutic techniques. The third part discusses the principles of treatment, provides an extensive formulary of topical and systemic medications, and gives detailed accounts of the composition of drugs used as well as their possible modes of action. The format is excellent and the material set out in a concise and systematised manner, enabling the reader to pick up the essentials almost at a glance.

The first part of 219 pages contains a chapter of 15 pages devoted to the sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). In fact, more space is allotted to STDs, as conditions such as candidosis, genital herpes, and genital warts are described in other parts of this section.

The information on STDs is generally accurate and to the point, but there are a few errors and omissions. The urethral discharge of nongonococcal urethritis is described as white or clear and that of gonorrhoea as mucopurulent. Although disseminated gonococcal infection and pelvic inflammatory disease are dealt with, epididymitis and Reiter's disease are omitted. No mention is made of idoxuridine in the treatment of the genital lesions of primary herpes.

These are minor criticisms of an otherwise admirable book. More colour photographs would have enhanced its value—but likewise its price. It would be a useful addition to the departmental library and can be highly recommended to medical students and junior medical staff.

C. S. Ratnatunga

Notice

The Specialist Advisory Committee of the Joint Committee for Higher Medical Training in association with the Council of the MSSVD have been considering the promotion prospects for senior registrars in the UK. Because of the expansion of the senior registrar grade prospects for promotion are now less for those without a higher qualification. Excellent career prospects remain for bright young men and women entering the specialty at SHO and registrar grades provided they obtain an appropriate higher qualification.