

The section on population growth and ecology is largely microbiological in emphasis, and the chapters on demography seem rather remote from human applications. A chapter on immunity could have been included with benefit. The best part of the book is the section on population genetics. It contains a clear and readily understandable account of the composition and functions of D.N.A. and R.N.A., together with good descriptions of the Watson-Crick model of D.N.A., the biological code, and the cellular basis of heredity. This is followed by a number of examples which provide interesting reading. The third section, on social behaviour, deals with the biological fundamentals, discussing first of all the wide variations in animals of behaviour and communication, and leading up to an account of human social behaviour in community life and in certain stress situations. The final section deals with disease in populations and especially the epidemiological considerations as seen from a biological viewpoint. The concluding chapter discusses senescence as a biological problem, but has little to offer except to emphasize how little is known about the process of ageing.

A book of this kind, which is the work of many specialists, is not easy to review. It contains much that is of interest, and much which seems to the general reader irrelevant and at times unrelated to the main theme. It could be that some of the biological examples quoted lend themselves more readily to presentation and illustration in the lecture theatre than in print. However, it will certainly provide a good source of reference for anyone wishing to get to grips with the biological principles of certain community health problems.

ANDREW B. SEMPLE.

### *Clinical Cardiologist*

**Bedside Cardiology.** Jules Constant. (Pp. 347; 105s.) J. & A. Churchill, 1970.

Physical examination of the heart and pulse is often glossed over in cardiology textbooks in favour of graphic recordings, catheterization, and angiocardiology. Dr. Constant makes a plea in this book to return to the bedside. Hence its title. Appropriately, he uses the question and answer technique which in the right hands gives such good results. The staccato effect can be distracting, but the author defends the method claiming, with Plato, that the question is used to help clear thinking. This is indeed true, but the author's associates have been more than facetious in calling the method Socratic. Plato's view of education as a process of recollection went much further than having his pupils answer questions. If Socrates had asked which valve normally closes first, aortic or pulmonary, he would not have been pleased with the answer suggested here, aortic then pulmonary—as in Atlantic and Pacific.

The book has two parts, the first part concerned with inspection and palpation, the second with auscultation. From the earliest comments on the peripheral pulses, it is clear that the author possesses the art of explaining physical signs based on proper understanding of the normal and abnormal

physiology. The chapters on the jugular pulse and praecordial pulsations show him to be a master of bedside teaching, in the manner of Paul Wood in Britain and Samuel Levine in the United States. The section on auscultation considers serially the normal and abnormal heart sounds and the different types of murmurs. By now, the reader should know he is in safe hands, and for a change he can believe everything he reads, facts being clearly stated and theories succinctly analysed. The questions are to the point, the answers crisp, incisive, mercifully free from verbosity, and illustrated by admirable line drawings. The errors are so trifling as to be not worth mentioning.

Everyone who wants to examine the heart properly should read this book. It should be mandatory for students approaching their final examinations burdened with excessive learning of cardiovascular haemodynamics and biochemistry.

WALTER SOMERVILLE.

### *Looking at Blood Cells*

**Morphology of the Blood and Marrow in Clinical Practice.** Richard T. Silver, M.D. (Pp. 125; \$17.50.) Grune & Stratton, 1970.

This book presents illustrations of blood and marrow cells together with interpretations of the appearances written particularly for those clinicians who prefer to study these cells in their patients rather than rely on a pathologist's report. There are eight colour plates showing eight to ten fields reproduced from colour photomicrographs. Within the limitations of the relatively small magnification employed, these are satisfactory and informative. There are also black-and-white figures illustrating such things as red cell shapes and histological sections of marrow tissue showing myelofibrosis and Hodgkin's disease, for example. The techniques preferred by the author are described briefly. Then follow nine chapters giving short outlines of the changes found in various cell types and the changes to be expected in the haematological disorders, both primary and secondary. These chapters are up-to-date and follow current haematological interpretations; they include, in fact, a remarkable amount of information.

The book fulfils the aim of the author very well. However, it is not so outstanding that it will replace the good, and less expensive, British productions of a similar character.

M. C. G. ISRAËLS.

### *Connective Tissue Lesions*

**The Differential Diagnosis of Fibroblastic Disorders.** D. H. MacKenzie, F.R.C.P. (Pp. 167; 55s.) Blackwell, 1970.

This monograph has three aims: to help the junior pathologist in histopathology, to aid the clinician in treatment, and to relate histological appearance to biological behaviour.

It begins with a review of the development and differentiation of mesenchyme, touching on the functions of the fibroblast and the histiocyte and on the nature of the "ground substance." The introductory sec-

tion is completed by a classification of fibroblastic disorders, which includes reactive and inflammatory lesions, the fibromatoses, and benign and malignant fibroblastic and histiocytic neoplasms.

There follow chapters dealing with each of these topics in further detail. The sections on the reactive and inflammatory lesions and on the benign fibroblastic tumours are particularly readable, and with the many histological illustrations should help clinicians who are dealing with these often puzzling clinical cases. The final chapter on practical investigation of a connective tissue lesion in the histopathology department after surgical excision is admirably clear and suitably cautious. The emphasis on the value of collaboration between pathologist and clinician in coming to a final opinion highlights the philosophy of a book on differential diagnosis written by a pathologist.

The layout of the book is good, the illustrations well reproduced, and the print clear. The author and publishers are to be congratulated on a valuable book of reference in a difficult field of diagnosis.

D. M. DOUGLAS.

### *Isolated Children*

**Non-communicating Children.** Louis Minski, F.R.C.P., D.P.M., and Margaret J. Shepperd, D.P.M. (Pp. 188; 50s.) Butterworths, 1970.

As consultant psychiatrist to the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital, Dr. Louis Minski became interested in the differential diagnosis of young non-communicating children. Some of these were very disturbed and it was difficult to decide whether they were deaf or not. There were no adequate facilities for long-term observation in an inadequately staffed unit. In 1953 a research grant from the South-west Metropolitan Hospital Board made it possible to adapt the former superintendent's house at Belmont hospital for the purpose of providing six places for children in need of detailed study and help. At a later date the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust bought a house in Sutton—where there is provision for six more children. With the help of their colleagues Drs. Minski and Shepperd now review 474 children investigated at the units between 1953 and 1967. The need for the provision and the value of these units is indisputable, as any who have visited them will agree. The authors attempt a classification of the children they have seen according to the major problem, whether this be mental retardation, deafness, psychosis, or neurological deficit of some other type.

This small volume is useful reading for all those interested in children with difficulties of communication. Dr. Minski's efforts should help to stimulate more general interest in the complicated problems presented by this group of disturbed children. In the past they have been labelled mentally defective or mentally subnormal, without much attention being paid to the several handicaps from which they may suffer, or their potential ability to respond when given appropriate instruction and attention. The authors make frequent references to the great difficulty which they have experienced