It is unsurprising that numerous misprints should occur in a volume of this kind, and most of them are harmless enough. The first paper is however marred by a sequence of blunders which sets the reader to work transposing captions, inverting ratios and so forth, and it was a relief to find the second and subsequent papers decently presented. The book is intended for a specialist readership, and it is certainly worth the attention of those involved in the biochemistry of heparin and, even more, those involved in directing heparin therapy.

E.A. Johnson

Pathology of Immunoglobulins: Diagnostic and Clinical Aspects

Protein Abnormalities, Volume 2

Edited by Stephan E. Ritzmann

Alan R. Liss; New York, 1982

x + 396 pages. £29.00

This is the second volume in a series designed to present recent advances in the study of proteins of biological interest in laboratory and clinical medicine.

The first volume examined diagnostic methodology and interpretation of electrophoresis, immunoelectrophoresis and immunochemical measurement of proteins together with pathophysiologic considerations of antibody structure and function and a detailed account of IgE.

This second volume discusses the measurement of viscosity, imbalance of kappa/lambda ratios and electrolyte abnormalities and the anion gap in immunoglobulin disorders. Pathophysiologic consideration is given to the effect of aging and ethnic differences on immunoglobulin levels and abnormalities and to cell surface receptor proteins. A third section is devoted to clinical aspects of immunoglobulin abnormalities with a chapter on immunoglobulin deficiencies and five chapters on monoclonal gammopathies (paraproteinaemia): Clinical Aspects, Disorders of Hyperviscosity, Bence-Jones Proteins, Disorders of Amyloid Deposition, and Unusual Manifestations of Plasma Cell Dyscrasia.

This volume has the inherent faults of any multi-author book. There is overlap between some sections e.g. amyloid is discussed in chapters 8 and 11 with some variations in classification and interpretation. Similarly the hyperviscosity syndrome is discussed in chapters 8 and 9. Other information becomes fragmented and is not always to be found where expected e.g. chapter 4: 'Effects of Aging of Immunoglobulins' deals predominantly with old age and age-related paraproteinaemia. Values for normal immunoglobulins in children are found scattered in other chapters of this and the previous volume. There is lack of conformity in the use of units e.g. immunoglobulin values are quoted in IU/ml, g/dl, mg/dl and mg/ml, and International Units for the measurement of viscosity are not used.

The book is well supplied with figures and tables but these are not always placed at the most convenient point in the text for the reader.

It is much easier to criticise than to edit a book of this type. The contributors are experts in their fields and many chapters make excellent reviews. The bibliographies are comprehensive, current and valuable although there is no consistent format in the numbering of references (in some chapters in order of appearance, and in others alphabetical).

There is no current comparable book and this, with the previous volume, makes a valuable contribution to the subject. This book should appeal particularly to laboratory based workers with clinical interests and will be of greatest value to those who can familiarise themselves with the contents rather than as a work of reference.

Pamela Riches

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