in both testicular and prostatic tumours, and the extensive discussion between sections is particularly useful for tying together the different assays and opposing views.

Other topics well covered are in the section on animal models and attempts at demonstrating specific antitumour immunity. From the clinical point of view the section on immunotherapy clearly indicates that little has yet been achieved, but as none of the studies reported had more than 20 patients, the positive results in the studies of BCG in bladder and kidney tumour did provide some encouragement.

The final section relates to studies of tumour regression after cryosurgery to the prostate. In a disease where chemotherapy has contributed little, this approach obviously deserves further evaluation.

This book may prove of value to reference libraries in centres with major urological departments.

R. T. D. Oliver

Progress in Experimental Tumour Research Vol 25: Current Cancer Immunology. (Ed) V. Richards (1980). Basel: Karger. 296 pp. US$87.00.

Progress is an optimist’s word for change. This excellent series of books returns once again (the 3rd time in 25 volumes) to tumour immunology, to document recent changes in the topic. The emphasis of this volume is on the clinical achievements of tumour immunology, and consequently it provides few signs of anything that even an optimist would call progress.

In the first 60 pages Dr Victor Richards attempts the impossible by trying to summarize the whole of immunology in a chapter which he calls an “overview”. This results, as one might expect, in oversights. Proofreading errors are abundant (e.g. “homograft resection” and “anti-idiopathic cells”). The use of outdated terminology and his enthusiasm for blocking factors conveys a powerful sense of déjà vu. He states with confidence (on p. 26) that every human neoplasm, adequately studied, contains specific antigens which elicit host responses. He may well be right, but such an uncritical acceptance of inadequate data is surprising. Ending, of course, on a note of exuberant optimism he tells us (in a cliché repeated by other contributors) that “immunotherapy of human cancer is in its infancy”. This remarkable case of arrested development is clearly documented in the rest of the book.

Apart from a useful section written by the Montreal group on immunological methods of diagnosis, the rest are familiar and optimistic accounts of immunotherapy. Between them the various authors weave a web of Byzantine complexity in their attempts to convince us that immunotherapy is, or is about to become, an effective form of treatment. Much of the evidence presented of the benefits of BCG, transfer factor, immune RNA, levamisole and specific antibodies is poorly controlled, and any attempt by your humble reviewer to detail the inadequacies of these studies would undoubtedly attract the attentions of Koestler’s Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Dead Horses.

By concentrating on the clinical aspects of tumour immunology this disappointing book might lead one to suppose that there has been little progress in this subject over the past 10 years. There have been substantial changes, but then, change is a pessimist’s word for progress.

G. A. Currie

Malignancies of the Ovary, Uterus and Cervix. R. S. Bush (1979). London: Arnold. 243 pp. £13.95.

This is the second book in a “Management of Malignant Disease Series” and is concerned with those aspects of the major gynaecological malignancies which contribute to the final decisions about treatment. Dr Bush starts with a very necessary discussion on “End points for evaluating treatment” that will be of benefit to anyone not working directly in the oncological field.

The body of the text is devoted to the 3 major gynaecological malignancies, carcinomas of the ovary, uterine body and cervix, and they are presented in the standard form: natural history, evaluation and management. There is no attempt to go into the technical details of the surgical and radiotherapeutic treatments involved, except where these relate to the different management schemes.

In tackling these difficult subjects the author manages to present well-reasoned arguments that lead to an understanding of the Princess Margaret approach. The text
contains a number of remarks that indicate sound practical experience, and a reassuring pragmatism that will be of considerable benefit to the inexperienced reader. Treatment is clearly related to the patient and the staging of the disease is allowed to play only a secondary part in the decision making. The management sections also contain interesting comments on post-treatment complications and their management, something rarely encountered, but again of enormous use to the less experienced reader.

Inevitably there are weaknesses in the book. The literature quoted has a strong North American bias, at some points the wording is loose, e.g. “intensity of radiation diminishes rapidly with distance” when the same number of words could have clarified the point successfully. There are a number of printing errors that should have been avoided by editing, some of which change the sense of the argument completely. The “decision trees” in the text really contribute nothing, in view of the clarity of the text itself, and the crossing of lines makes them visually confusing.

In spite of these limitations, the strengths of the management sections are such that this should be an important text for anybody embarking on a training in gynaecological malignancies.

R. Hunter

Cancer—The Facts. Sir Ronald Bodley Scott (1979). Oxford Medical Publications. 208 pp. £4.50.

There must be very few people, whatever their professional background, who would not find something to learn in this excellent small book. Although it is aimed at the general reader and makes virtually no assumptions of medical knowledge on the reader’s part, it manages to provide an informed and balanced account, not only of general problems relating to cancer, but also of cancer at most important individual sites.

The book ranges very widely, embracing clinical diagnosis and treatment, carcinogenesis, the general epidemiology of cancer and the problems that are raised by concerted attempts to prevent cancer or diagnose it at an earlier stage. The discussion is securely based on remarkable factual knowledge which is up-to-date throughout.

However, the principal delight of the book for this reader is the English prose style in which it is written. The writing is always lucid and elegant and often strikingly felicitous. It used to be traditional that doctors wrote well; this work provides constant reminders of the golden age of medical writing. The book can be recommended not only to the medically uninformed reader but to most doctors, for there is not only much to learn about cancer in it but a great deal to learn about how to express oneself in the English language.

A. Smith

Problems in Breast Pathology 11. Major Problems in Pathology. J. G. Azzopardi (1979). London: Saunders. 466 pp. £25.00.

In his preface Professor Azzopardi states that his book is essentially concerned with diagnostic problems in breast pathology. Such is the nature of the subject, however, that in elucidating these problems he also illuminates the whole spectrum of mammary disease, ranging across techniques of pathological examination, normal structure, terminology and classification, and various disease entities (both common and rare) in an erudite manner. The literature of such difficult topics as the relationship of cystic disease to carcinoma is thoroughly and lucidly reviewed, with the clear-cut conclusions of the author being stated in a refreshingly forthright manner. Of particular practical value will be chapters 9 and 10 on the overdiagnosis and underdiagnosis of malignancy, which, when read in conjunction with chapter 7 on epitheliosis and in situ carcinoma, provide a superb practical guide to the avoidance of dangerous errors in that recurrent challenge to the surgical pathologist: the difficult breast biopsy. The main body of the book is augmented by chapters on ultrastructure by Ahmed and mammography by Millis. It is beautifully produced, and lavishly illustrated with an abundance of high-quality black-and-white photomicrographs which will be of great value to the histopathologist.

In short, this is an excellent book which combines the qualities of a practical bench book with a scholarly examination of the subject matter. No histopathology department could invest £25 more wisely than in the purchase of this book.

M. Harris