Book Reviews

Catalog of Teratogenic Agents. THOMAS H. SHEPARD. (1973). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 224 pp. Price £4.50.

This book, containing 649 separate items, is a valuable source of information on teratogenic agents for both clinician and scientist. References are predominantly concerned with experimental teratology but the information is linked to that on congenital defects found in man. Also included are a number of compounds often considered to be teratogenic but with substantially negative effects although, overall, the book is a catalogue and does not attempt to make a critical analysis of the data. Preparation has been simplified by the use of a computer programme which makes the format unattractive. However, this is justified on the grounds of speed of assembly and low production cost. There appear, on a quick assessment, to be a number of minor errors in the spelling despite the computer's scrutiny. The use of an initial oo- for all the catalogue numbers is unnecessary suggesting only a rather different kind of special agent. There is also a table comparing the timing of stages in embryonic and foetal development for different species which might have been more appropriately located with the notes in the text rather than on the endpapers.

A. W. CRAIG

Monographs on Oncology—The Chest. THOMAS J. DEELEY. (1973). London: Butterworths. Price £22.25.

This is a paperback volume of 109 pages devoted mainly to cancer of the lung in its many aspects but with supplementary chapters on secondary deposits in the lungs and in the mediastinum. The author's objective is to present a broad picture which may improve the understanding of the more specialized reader and help to achieve greater inter-disciplinary co-operation. He deserves to succeed for his style is easy, his presentation is balanced and he does not overload his text with indigestible facts. Having stimulated his reader however, he has a duty to provide him with directions to a wide range of further reading; limited bibliographies and references are included but these could be expanded with advantage and without interfering with the clarity of the text.

This book can be recommended as part of the general reading for a trainee in any of the disciplines covered by oncology, from basic science through medicine to education, and it will also be of value to nurses and radiographers.

I. D. H. TODD

The Spread of Tumours in the Human Body. R. A. WILLIS. (1973). 3rd edition. London: Butterworths. Price £8.

The first edition of this well-known book appeared in 1934, the earliest of a series of volumes which put Professor Willis in the forefront of authors writing on human pathology. This book is based on the results of a consecutive series of 500 necropsies on cases of malignant disease, together with an exhaustive review of the literature up to that time. A second edition appeared in 1952. As Professor Willis notes in his preface to this third edition, it is impossible to read and assimilate the enormous volume of recent publications on the subject of tumour spread, and he has therefore selected 350 representative recent references for inclusion, as well as rewriting parts of the text.

Essentially, therefore, this is the same book as the original. The reader will not find much discussion of, say, the roles of local cell-mediated immunity, or of proteolytic enzymes, in the spread of neoplasms. Most of the references are to papers published before 1939, and indeed a substantial proportion date from the previous century.

However, any criticism on these grounds would be beside the point, because this book is now itself one of the classical texts in human pathology, a work of scrupulous scholarship, based on careful personal observations and a critical and exhaustive appraisal of the earlier literature. It is written with