BOOKS RECEIVED

Infectious diarrhoea

Edited by S. L. GORBACH. 1986. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford. Pp. ix and 328. £35.00.

The book consists of 19 chapters, each with different authors. Because of this the style and quality varies considerably. The editor intends the book to be a "state of the art" update on various diarrhoeal pathogens.

All the major pathogens (bacteria, viruses and parasites) are covered. Most of the chapters, on a single pathogen or groups of pathogens, commence with some elementary microbiology which in most instances is so simplified as to be of minimal use. On the contrary, the clinical aspects, and to a slightly lesser extent the epidemiological considerations, are adequate. Some of the general chapters found towards the end of the book might well have been omitted because they produce much repetition from previous chapters. In particular, the chapter on Laboratory Studies seems misplaced in what is seen to be essentially a book aimed at clinicians.

An overall assessment leads the reviewer to recommend this as a useful text for the general physician who needs information on recent advances in diarrhoeal diseases. Equally, the microbiologist will find useful information from the clinical and epidemiological presentations. In such a rapidly advancing field it is to be expected that there are deficiencies in some of the more recent discoveries but most of the authors have successfully reached the editor's target.

B. ROWE

Legionella infections

By C. L. R. BARTLETT, A. D. MACRAE and J. MCFARLANE. 1986. Edward Arnold, London. Pp. ix and 163. £27.50.

It is now over a decade since Legionnaires' disease made its dramatic entry at the now famous Pennsylvania State Convention of the American Legion in Philadelphia. However, despite numerous advances since, outbreaks of the disease continue to occur. This book, therefore, serves as a timely guide to the present knowledge of Legionnaires' disease. Indeed, within its 163 pages the authors have produced a succinct but practical review of the various aspects of this infection.

The first two chapters gently introduce the reader to the Legionellaceae, with a particularly useful section on terminology and classification. Subsequent chapters deal with the clinical aspects, diagnosis and management of legionella pneumonia. The clear account of the clinical features of *Legionella pneumophila* pneumonia serve to remove many of the myths that have been built up concerning this disease. The following chapters deal with pathology and laboratory diagnosis, including serology of legionella infections. The importance of correct timing for the collection of blood samples for antibody studies is also reviewed. In the final two sections of the book, the environment sources of infection, modes of transmission, surveillance control and prevention are presented. These give an overall summary of the conclusions from various studies of outbreaks. The guidelines should serve as a useful framework for prevention and control.

This book should appeal to a wide audience, including clinicians and engineers involved in the treatment and control of the disease. It is to be hoped that it will contribute to the universal "fall of Legionnaires' disease", as previously described by the authors in Nottingham.

T. S. J. ELLIOTT