by the same chromosome can be associated in a single immunoglobulin polypeptide chain must stand, exactly how the constant and variable regions are fused together is still an unsolved problem. The enthusiasm of the authors is made clear by their many suggestions for future activities. In seeking to keep the book a conveniently small size, the references are highly selective, which tends to lead to unjustifiable omissions; for example, the source of an almost verbatim quotation which appeared in 12 lines of the text, from the summary of a paper which appeared in the *Lancet*, was not cited in the references. Nevertheless, this book can be recommended to anyone who wants to know more about the immunoglobulin molecule and is prepared to grapple with a text which is sometimes quite difficult.

SYLVIA D. LAWLER

Automated Immuno-Precipitin Reactions: New Methods, Techniques and Evaluations (Pp. x + 70; illustrated. £1.00) Basingstoke: Technicon Instruments Company Ltd. 1972.

This small volume represents a series of papers presented at a colloquium on automated immuno-precipitin reactions at the University of Louvain in Belgium and at the Technicon International Congress in New York, 1972. Fifteen papers were presented, with subjects ranging from the estimation of fibrinogen and its dimer in hypercoagulable states, the analysis of low-density lipoproteins to the automated analyses of alpha-antitrypsin, immunoglobulins, and transferrin. The underlying common factor was the utilization of the Technicon automated nephelometric immunoassay procedures using one or more fluoronephelometers in sequential continuous-flow analyses. The standard of the presentations is very high, and what is particularly valuable is the informed discussion by participants, many of whom are well known either in the field of protein chemistry or in the field of automation of clinical chemical procedures. Considerable attention was paid to the problems of standardization and interpretation of the data. Altogether this is a very stimulating monograph in a rapidly developing field of automated chemistry.

M. G. RINSLER

Modern Trends in Forensic Medicine Third series. Edited by A. Keith Mant.

(Pp. ix + 301; illustrated. £7.00.) London: Butterworth Group. 1973.

The first series of *Modern Trends in Forensic Medicine* were edited by Professor Keith Simpson and the influence on the new series of the Guy's Hospital School of Forensic Medicine is happily still very obvious.

This series contains 10 articles, most of which cover topics that are of everyday importance and interest to practising forensic pathologists. Some, including that on the investigation of road deaths and that about the problem of sudden, unexpected death in childhood, will be of great interest to hospital morbid anatomists. If I was asked to give a prize to the best contribution to this book, I think it would go to Dr Lyons of New York University for the latter chapter, which gives an admirable and up-to-date rundown on the present state of knowledge and includes a critique of almost every theory yet put forward to account for sudden deaths of infants, and underlines our complete ignorance of the truth of the matter. Runner up for a first prize would be difficult to choose from so many excellent chapters. A likely nomination is that by Dr Peter Pullar, who contributes a painstaking review of the histopathology of wounds, which leaves one with the feeling that although the author says that timing wounds by histochemistry is straightforward, the next time the question is really important one will send the tissue, including of course, deep frozen cryostat sections, to his laboratory and plead with him to examine it.

The latest on the American firearm scene, appropriately from Dallas, Texas, will intrigue all pathologists with a little of the small boy left in their mentality. Although to the English ear the 'Blondean slug' and the 'super vel frangible iron bullet' sound like some ludicrous latter-day Alice Through the Looking Glass objects, the chapter is deadly serious, and with increasing internationalization of society, one can never tell when one may see, for example, a shot-gun wound coloured fluorescent orange by plastic interstitial material from modern buck-shot ammunition. On a philosophical plane, it makes one wonder how much evil the firearms industry is responsible for.

Many pathologists may feel that the book is marred by a very long contribution on the controversial report of a Home Office Committee on Death

Certification and Coroners (Broderick), longer, for example, than the chapter on modern toxicology. It mixes a summary of the report with the author's personal views that would have been more appropriate to the forum of a current journal or meeting than to an otherwise authoritative book such as this.

A. C. HUNT

Postgraduate Obstetrical and Gynaecological Pathology Edited by H. Fox and F. A. Langley. (Pp. xiv + 590; illustrated. £12.00.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1973.

This book is based on a course of lectures given to postgraduate trainees in both pathology and obstetrics and gynaecology. Twenty-one different authors have contributed, but the editors, who have written four chapters each, have achieved a uniform style and standard throughout. A good balance is attained between factual description, review of the literature, and personal opinion.

The book begins with a clear account of the embryological development of the genital tract and this is followed logically by chapters on developmental and chromosomal abnormalities. The pathology of each region is then considered in turn, always against a background of the relevant anatomy and physiology. However, in contrast to some books with a similar title, only half the book is concerned with gynaecological topics. The remainder deals with obstetrics and includes haematological and renal disorders of pregnancy, the physiology and pathology of the placenta, and unusually, but of obvious relevance, four chapters on the pathology of the fetus and newborn.

The full treatment of ovarian tumours with a useful classification and consideration of histogenesis in relation to normal gonad development should help to resolve much confusion. The simple approach to the vexed question of chronic vulval dystrophy seems sensible but I expect the old nomenclature will die hard. The account of intraepithelial cervical carcinoma and related lesions is a concise summary of present knowledge but, as in several other chapters, more photomicrographs of improved quality would have been helpful. The section on cytology contains much practical advice which I wish could be read by all who take cervical smears. Obstetricians will find the chapter on neonatal cerebral damage depressing reading.