Introduction to Virology. By Gilbert Dalldorf. (Pp. ix+102; illustrated. 25s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1955.

This is a very readable little book which contains a great deal of useful information about virus diseases in general, and sufficient detail to whet the appetite, particularly of the physician who wishes to take an interest in this subject. Some of the material and advice is written from the standpoint of conditions and practice in the United States of America, so that there may be slight divergencies of opinion on methods. Suitable warning on laboratory infections is given to beginners who wish to dabble with viruses in the laboratory, but there is a slightly optimistic tone concerning simplicity of the work which might lead to confusion for those who are not constantly self-critical.

F. O. MACCALLUM.

The Plasma Proteins in Pregnancy—A Clinical Interpretation. By Harold C. Mack. (Pp. xii+118; illustrated. 27s. 6d.) Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas; Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1955.

The logical extrapolation of the old saw about specialists would be that they know everything about nothing. Dr. Mack's book does not reach this Nirvana of the absolute. The account is given in simple language and should be read easily with the minimum of scientific training. The book is well documented, but there are some irritating topographical and scientific inaccuracies. These may arise from hurried production. Thus, on page 29, surely the author means "a pint" and not "a point . . . of additional blood," and on page 8 the speed of migration of particles does not depend on the number of charges each carry but on the net difference between the positive and negative charge carried. Nevertheless, this book should prove a most excellent starting point for obstetricians who, lacking technical knowledge, are nevertheless eager to know something of the ideas which the newer advances in protein chemistry have developed in their field.

N. H. MARTIN.

La Progénèse: Facteurs Préconceptionnels du Développement de l'Enfant. Edited by Raymond Turpin. (Pp. 720; 56 figures. Fr. fr. 3,500.) Paris: Masson et Cie. 1955.

Under the direction of Professor Raymond Turpin, a team of geneticists, paediatricians, pathologists, and sociologists have all contributed in the realization of this book, which, as the title suggests, is a study of those factors which will determine the development of the child even before conception.

The first part of the book is devoted to the mechanics and laws of heredity, sex-linked disease, and the production of gene mutations. Sober warning is given of the danger to future generations by the inheritance of reces-

sive genes produced by radioactive materials. Experimental and clinical evidence of changes in the germ plasma by malnutrition, ageing, and physicochemical agents and its relation to congenital malformations is discussed in detail.

The relation of ethnology, demography, anthropology, and other allied sciences to genetics and their integration to give a composite picture makes fascinating reading. However, to the clinician and pathologist the sections devoted to the role of heredity in disease and predisposition to disease will be of special interest, as well as the excellent description of the inheritance of blood groups and the Rhesus factor.

Finally there is a section on the social problems which confront the geneticist, with a plea for more control over the breeding of mental defectives, as is practised at present in the Scandinavian countries.

In this book Professor Turpin and his co-workers have succeeded in showing the far-reaching possibilities of genetics in its relation to medicine and how in time it should become preventive medicine in its truest form. While invaluable to the specialist, it can be read with profit by all.

A. T. MCNEIL.

Transactions of the American Goiter Association 1954. (Pp. xii+483; illustrated. £5.) Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas; Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1955.

This volume is the detailed report of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Goiter Association held in Boston in the spring of 1954. It consists of 36 original papers arranged in groups of two or three, followed by a discussion of each group. The meeting was attended by thyroid experts from all parts of the world, and, as would be expected, a wide range of subjects was covered. While no startling new developments are reported, the book represents an important contribution to the physiology, pathology, and treatment of thyroid disease.

It would be impossible to list here all the subjects dealt with, but particular mention might be made of the studies of the thyroidal uptake of radioactive astatine (eka-iodine) in the rat. This new halogen of atomic number 85 is substantially heavier than iodine, the atomic weight of the isotopes employed being either 210 or 211. It is selectively taken up by the thyroid gland in a manner similar to that of iodine and can be used to destroy thyroid in rats. A substantial number of the animals, however, developed unexplained mammary carcinomas one or two years later.

Work has also been recorded on thyroid function in patients with impaired liver function, the demonstration of an exophthalmos-producing substance in human serum, the biological effects of triiodothyronine in human subjects, and on a variety of goitrogenic substances ranging from calcium salts to cabbages and turnips. There is also a paper on the effect of thyroid treatment on fat metabolism and a number of ^{131}I uptake studies in various clinical states. The last few papers are devoted to cancer of the thyroid and cover both pathology and treatment.