Short books can be extremely valuable to the practising clinician, but their content has to be selected carefully if they are to remain useful and this volume has not really provided the clinical perspective so important for a publication of this type.

M. TURNER WARWICK

Microbial Pathogenicity in Man and Animals Symposium 22 of the Society for General Microbiology. Edited by H. Smith and J. H. Pearce. (Pp. 451; illustrated. £6.20.) London: Cambridge University Press. 1972.

Published simultaneously with the Symposium, this book consists of the written papers of 18 contributors. The main attention is given to five aspects of the subject, namely, the ability of microbes to enter the host by surviving on and penetrating mucous membranes, their ability to grow within the host, their ability to counteract host defence mechanisms, and the reasons for host and tissue specificity.

The tone is set by the first chapter, that after reminding the reader that in many countries public health measures, unaided by sophisticated biochemical research, have controlled the worst effects of bacterial disease, goes on to draw attention to the difficulties of investigating the determinants of pathogenicity, and to point out how much there is still to discover. The subsequent chapters give a detailed and up-to-date account of the large amount of work going on in this field, and will be welcomed not only for their content but as a valuable source of references.

R. A. SHOOTER

Immunobiology: Current Knowledge of Basic Concepts and Their Clinical Applications Edited by R. A. Good and D. W. Fisher. (Pp. xii + 305; illustrated. £5.20.) Stamford, Connecticut: Sinauer Associates Inc. Distributed in United Kingdom by W. H. Freeman and Co. Ltd, Reading. 1971.

Textbooks of immunology are almost as many and diverse as immune reactions themselves. *Immunobiology* by R. A. Good and D. W. Fisher is distinguished by the anecdotal flavouring of the text and by the profusion of illustrations. These make it supremely readable — although perhaps that is not quite the right word. We know that the modern scientist must be not only literate but numerate: to understand the hieroglyphs and anaglyphs

of biology he must be something else—glyphate, perhaps.

The figure illustrates the probable effect of reading this book.

H. E. M. KAY

Clinical Chemistry in Diagnosis and Treatment By Joan F. Zilva and P. R. Pannall. (Pp. xxvi + 430; 39 figures; 26 tables. £2.50.) London: Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd. 1971.

This is one of the best books on elementary clinical chemistry that I have met. The preface states: 'It is written for those who learn best if they understand what they are learning'; the authors have done their best to set out explanations for the facts when these are known and most of us would feel that to understand what one is learning this is essential. Wisely, no attempt is made to be exhaustive and this has compelled the authors to be selective in the material they have put out: no two people will ever agree on what ought to be omitted but your reviewer would find it hard to fault the selections made. At £2.50 the book is cheap by modern book price standards. It can be wholeheartedly recommended for medical students and

for junior medical staff and many of their seniors will find parts which are both helpful and profitable for them.

ARTHUR JORDAN

Laboratory Tests in Diagnosis and Investigation of Endocrine Function 2nd edition. Edited by Roberto F. Escamilla. (Pp. xvii + 456; 107 figures; 85 tables. £11.75.) Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1971.

This book is described in the preface as a second edition (the first was in 1962); in reality it represents publication of the contributions to a postgraduate course held in San Francisco. Of the 33 contributors, 22 are from San Francisco and another seven from other parts of California, so the book may be regarded as giving a very representative view of the pattern of clinical endocrinology in San Francisco. The topics covered are pituitary, thyroid, parathyroid, pancreatic islets, adrenals, testes, and the ovaries. The plan of the course provides an introductory chapter to each topic written by a clinician in which he outlines the tests now in use in clinical practice; this is followed by chapters by different scientific investigators reporting their own work, indicating the individual fields of the subject and trying to forecast the future. This last aspect needs to be viewed with caution.

It is difficult to know at what kind of audience the book is aimed. The level would be elementary for the hospital chemical pathologist and the clinical aspects are too elementary for the clinician. It is perhaps best suited to registrars in chemical pathology but for this it is too expensive. The individual chapters are necessarily of varying quality but, in terms of the apparent objectives of the book, competently done. The chapter by M. M. Grumbach on sex chromosomes is particularly capable.

On the whole the book is not recommended.

ARTHUR JORDAN

Biomedical Technology in Hospital Diagnosis Edited by Alex. T. Elder and Desmond W. Neill. (Pp. xxvi + 503; illustrated. £17.00.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1972.

Lord Zuckerman in the foreword of this book stresses the importance of bio-