would also find it useful. Both groups are likely to be deterred by the price from buying it.

J. BURSTON

Acute Diarrhoea in Childhood. Ciba Symposium 42 (new series). Edited by Katherine Elliott and Julie Knight. (Pp. ix + 375; illustrated; \$26.95 approx.) Amsterdam: Oxford: New York: Excerpta Medica. 1976.

This book, compiled from a Ciba Symposium held in October 1975, shows how recent advances in bacteriology, virology, and epidemiology have improved our understanding of enteritis. Bacterial pathogenesis is explained, but their identification as pathogens when isolated is still uncertain. A discussion of the inhibitory effects of iron-binding proteins upon *Escherichia coli* introduces a free-for-all on the advantages of breast milk which disappointed because of attempts to produce a balanced view. Immune responses receive scant mention due to a continuing ignorance of the mechanisms, and there is a useful study on the pathogenesis and persistence of disaccharidase deficiency. There follows an exciting series of contributions dealing with rotavirus infections, emphasising their global importance as a major disease of childhood, although aspects of epidemiology here are still unclear. The influence of malnutrition is described, and the book ends with a plea for the application of these developments to patient care and prophylaxis. All paediatricians and those treating children with diarrhoea must read this book, in the best interests of their sick charges and their own understanding of the disease.

C. M. M. STERN

Immunology of Parasitic Infections. Edited by Sydney Cohen and Elvio Sadun. (Pp. x + 498; illustrated; £15.50) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1976.

Not so long ago the study of parasite immunity was regarded by many immunologists as rather eccentric and outside the mainstream of modern immunology. But a small band of devotees disagreed and have seen their persistence rewarded by the tremendous current awakening of interest in the subject, and by this excellent book, in which so many of them are brought together. In it, the major proto-

zoal and helminth diseases are discussed, each by an expert, in relation to modern immunological ideas. In each case there is a chapter on diagnosis and another on the immune response with an indication of the prospects for vaccination. The high and uniform standard here surely reflects the guiding influence of the editors, who supply, in useful chapters of their own, enough general immunology and parasitology to save the reader having to keep consulting other texts. Seldom has a book been so urgently needed, and seldom does a new book so precisely fill its bibliographical niche. The layout is clear, with good diagrams and up-to-date references, though there are rather a lot of minor misprints. At the price it is an excellent buy for libraries and immunology and parasitology laboratories.

J. H. L. PLAYFAIR

Clot. By J. L. Tullis (Pp. xvi + 572; illustrated; \$39.50) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1976.

The title of this book is arresting if not appealing. In any case it is not exclusive because all aspects of haemostasis and thrombosis are discussed including, of course, blood coagulation. The book is intended as a comprehensive review for basic investigators, clinicians, and students. Each subject is first treated with regard to basic physiology and chemistry. There then follow four chapters dealing with general descriptions of haemostatic defects. Clinical disorders of haemostasis are dealt with in the next six chapters, and there are three chapters on hypercoagulability and thrombosis. Finally, there is a non-technical survey of methods, a glossary, and an index. The book contains an immense amount of information, and the older and much of the newer literature is extensively and succinctly reviewed. It is, however, in this particular aspect that one has reservations. The discussions, although up to date, tend to be uncritical and a little unselective, perhaps in an attempt to be complete. It is more-over doubtful if the needs of researcher, clinician, and student can in fact be adequately encompassed in one volume. The cover is too superficial for the researcher and too unselective for the student. The layout of the book is unconventional and leads to repetition and lack of continuity. Thus the clinician seeking help with treatment may find information in several sections. These,

however, are relatively minor criticisms. This is a medium-sized comprehensive text written by a distinguished leader in the field. It will be received with interest by discerning experts who, if they can afford the outlay, will enjoy reading it.

A. L. BLOOM

IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risk of Chemicals to Man. Volume 10: Some Naturally Occurring Substances (Pp. 353; Sw. fr. 38, \$15.20) **Volume 11: Cadmium, Nickel, Some Epoxides, Miscellaneous Industrial Chemicals and General Considerations on Volatile Anaesthetics.** (Pp. 306; Sw. fr. 34, \$13.60). Lyon: International Agency for Research on Cancer. 1976.

After a doubtful start this series of monographs has come to be regarded as a useful and important source of reasonably up-to-date information on chemicals that may be hazardous for man. Where clinical or epidemiological data are available they are assessed in the monographs, but for most chemicals which have been found to be carcinogenic for animals no human data are available for review. The assessments are made by varying groups of scientists who meet at the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Lyon, France, where they amend previously prepared draft monographs. The value of the assessments varies from meeting to meeting and from chemical to chemical, so that from a scientific point of view they cannot be taken as uniformly authoritative. For instance, not everyone who has seen slides from the livers of rats exposed to coumarin agrees that any of the lesions which developed were bile-duct carcinomas; however, the interpretive problems in relation to these lesions are not mentioned in the monograph on coumarin (Volume 10, p. 113). The monograph on cadmium and cadmium compounds (Volume 11, p. 39) concludes, 'Available studies indicate that occupational exposures to cadmium in some form (possibly the oxide) increases the risk of prostate cancer in man. In addition, one of these studies suggests an increased risk of respiratory tract cancer'. One wonders whether the evidence quoted in the monograph justifies such a definite conclusion. The suggested excessive risk of respiratory cancer arose from a report of a study of 292 smelters for whom no details of smoking habits are provided, and the figures for excessive risk of prostatic cancer carry little conviction.

There are, therefore, grounds for questioning some of the conclusions reached in the monographs. Nevertheless, in the wake of the Health and Safety at Work Act in this country and similar legislation in the United States and elsewhere, this collection of monographs is extremely useful in pointing the finger at carcinogenically hazardous and suspect chemicals and in providing summaries of available relevant information.

F. J. C. ROE

Chromatographic and Electrophoretic Techniques. Volume 1. **Paper and Thin Layer Chromatography**, 4th edition. Edited by Ivor Smith and J. W. T. Seakins. (Pp. ix + 465; illustrated; £9.00.) London: Heinemann Medical Books. 1976.

The fourth edition of this wellknown book, now co-edited by Drs Smith and Seakins and with a number of new contributors, has been entirely rewritten. Although only half the size of the previous volume, nothing of value has been lost and the clear presentations of technique now make it a very valuable laboratory manual. The introduction includes a section on the early history of chromatography and this enables one to set in perspective the modern techniques which are used in areas such as screening for inborn errors of metabolism and toxicological analyses. Most of the applications described are taken from clinical biochemistry and toxicology but the very explicit practical information given will allow the application of these techniques across the field of biological sciences. I feel this book must be considered essential in all clinical chemistry laboratories.

BRENDA M. SLAVIN

Molecular and Cellular Mechanisms in Disease. Parts 1 and 2 (not available separately). By Julien L. van Lancker (Pp. 1168; illustrated; US \$148.50) Berlin: Heidelberg: New York: Springer-Verlag. 1976.

This attractively presented two-volume textbook of pathology is a mammoth undertaking for a single author. It is well illustrated by electron micrographs and black-and-white tissue photographs collected over a 20-year period; there is also good use of figures and diagrams to illustrate the pathological basis of disease.

In 16 chapters, starting with 'Cellular Sources of Energy' and ending with

'Cancer', the author covers a wide range of pathology which is presented as a mixture of biochemistry, molecular biology, and tissue pathology. This provides a vast amount of information, which is often given a short historical perspective, but it is difficult to read except as a reference textbook.

Inevitably a text of this scale suffers the lack of depth of the single-author approach, and postgraduates will prefer shorter, more specialised texts or similar textbooks of multi-author origin. Nor is the text or price appropriate for the undergraduate.

J. STUART

British Medical Bulletin, Volume 32, No. 3, September 1976, **Haemoglobin: Structure, Function and Synthesis**. Edited by D. J. Weatherall (Pp. 193-292; illustrated; £3.00, \$9.00) London: The British Council Medical Department. 1976.

This number of the Bulletin is devoted to selected aspects of current haemoglobin research in the United Kingdom. The 14 papers include such aspects as molecular structure, oxygen binding and altered affinity, measurement of globin gene number, control mechanisms of globin synthesis, globin messenger RNA, erythroid cell differentiation, and intrauterine synthesis of haemoglobin. There are also the obligatory sections on thalassaemia, sickle-cell disease and unstable haemoglobins. It offers good value and essential reading for the specialist with a major laboratory or clinical interest in the evolving saga of the haemoglobin molecule.

J. STUART

Dermatological Photobiology. By I. A. Magnus. (Pp. xii + 292; illustrated; £9.75.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1976.

Photobiology impinges on a sizable part of dermatological practice; it also relates to topics in general medicine, such as porphyria and vitamin D synthesis, and it even involves the general practitioner who has to arbitrate on the dinner-party chit-chat about supersonic cancers. The timing of Professor Magnus' book is therefore excellent; so, in general, is the book. It gives a mostly clear, practical, and theoretical account of the subject with a good bibliography for further reading. Professor Magnus has himself

worked in the field for many years and his views are based on a deep understanding born of a close contact with the subject. Inevitably the book does suffer from the drawback of accounts written by those who have themselves contributed to the story, and that is a tendency to unbalance it. Thus the stunning new findings on ultraviolet radiation and DNA repair are dismissed in just over twice the space spent on the history, mostly nomenclatural of polymorphic light eruption (which, after a scathing attack on the pseudoclassical ancestry of clinical scientific jargon, is surprisingly called PLE in deference to a barren contemporary firstletterese); the prostaglandin story is likewise brief. In these rapidly moving fields the account is a little dated (and so occasionally is the writing, with its academic baroque—'the author of this book...', '... the present author', 'academic olympian'—'skin responses that seem to be photosensitive may, one supposes, be of various origin (a) ...', 'academic popular—the charming Boy Annual account on page 33 of how to demonstrate phosphorescence'). But these whims of the personal approach are not important; in fact my main disappointment was that we do not have enough of Professor Magnus' own views: for many there was a lack of personal synthesis. From Professor Magnus' great expertise in the field I had hoped for more resolution of problems on the one hand and more controversy on the other. For example, with few notable exceptions, the monochromator (in diagnostic) practice is a disappointment. Why? I have my own personal explanations but I was hoping to find a more critical discussion. Again, to take a few points at random, I would have liked a much sharper discussion of β -carotene therapy, lysosomes, screening tests, and the Tyndall effect. Professor Magnus has shown in other sections of the book that he is able to give such a critical review and I hope that he will extend this in the next edition, which I am quite sure will be called for.

S. SHUSTER

Microbiological Methods, 4th edition. By C. H. Collins and Patricia M. Lynne (Pp. 521; illustrated; £9.50.) London: Butterworths. 1976.

This book had three editions within six years of its original publication, but further six were to elapse before the appearance of the present edition. It was