into the pathology of the disease in general and no discussion of the significant features shown. This book may be suitable for occupying the first week of an SHO appointment but otherwise it compares unfavourably with established rivals.

WK BLENKINSOPP

The Collection, Fractionation, Quality Control, and Uses of Blood and Blood Products. (Pp 126; Sw fr 15.) World Health Organisation. 1981.

Too many things feature in this book. It is not a compendium of present practice in the somewhat diverse chapters on which it depends. We thus have some unrelated topics such as care, selection and use of plasmapheresis donors which all transfusionists will welcome, followed by use and contra-indications of albumoid solutions which featured as a Council of Europe monograph last year. Similarly, a Council of Europe publication of the Use of Coagulation Products has been published and nothing unusual is presented for the informed reader.

The final section on immunoglobulins and their uses is welcomed since there is no established treatise where such information is collected together for easy access. Taking that the World Health Organisation has a remit to inform and help, this book will be of great value throughout the world if nothing else but to indicate what is topical, what can be achieved, and what is yet to be achieved. It is essential reading for blood transfusionists all over the world as a guide and friend.

With rapid changes in blood transfusion centre requirements for quality assurance and validation of data, this book comes at a most opportune time for many workers in the United Kingdom. It is well informed and easily read and can be confidently recommended.

R MITCHELL

Notes on Medical Bacteriology. Ed J Douglas Sleight and Morag C Timbury. (Pp 354; illustrated; paperback £5.95.) Churchill Livingstone. 1981.

Dr Sleight and Professor Timbury have written a book which fills a much needed gap in the texts available for medical students. Current teaching of microbiology is usually disease orientated whereas most student texts are microorganism orientated and many students have found this quite a problem. This text combines both

approaches to the subject and yet is still both reasonable in size and price. It is divided into four sections, these being bacterial biology, medically important bacteria, bacterial disease, and treatment and prevention of bacterial disease. It achieves all this in three hundred and fifty pages by using a note form which does not appeal to all teachers but is much favoured by students. In my opinion this disadvantage is more than compensated for by the amount of material contained within the covers. The text is eminently readable and mostly very sound; the few errors present are mostly minor and will no doubt be corrected when the book goes to a second edition (as I am sure it will). The biggest omission in my opinion are short sections on parasitology and mycology, which are not strictly bacteriology, but nevertheless are important subjects and not ones for which medical students should buy separate texts. (It is assumed that students will buy the companion virological text.) The other criticism is the extremely abbreviated reading list. It is headed "recommended reading" and lists only three books (Benenson, Christie and Topley, and Wilson). It would be much more valuable if an extended list of further reading be given so that students can delve deeper into sections of the subject which they find of interest.

Despite these criticisms I wholeheartedly recommend this text for all medical students; the authors are to be congratulated.

ELIZABETH SHAW

Metabolic Acidosis. Ciba Foundation Symposium no. 87. Ed Ruth Porter and GERALYN LAWRENSEN. (Pp 393; illustrated; £25.) The Ciba Foundation 1982.

The human body produces 150 g of hydrogen ions each day. How that huge amount of ions is produced, how their production and disposal is balanced to maintain a constant "milieu interieur", and what happens when that balance is disturbed was the theme of a meeting held last year under the auspices of the Ciba Foundation. A proper understanding of physiological and biochemical processes depends on accurate in vivo measurements. A major advance in this field has been the introduction of microelectrodes and NMR methods for measuring intracellular pH and all metabolism. There can be no better way of bringing oneself up to date in this

fundamental area than to read the crystal-clear expositions by Cohen and by Radda on these topics. They alone would justify having this book in one's personal possession. But there are further bonuses: excellent papers on the effects of acidosis on the heart, the brain, and the kidney; extensive studies on the major metabolic acidoses—ketoacidosis and lactic acidosis; and an invaluable appendix, prepared by Woods and Cohen, on quantitative aspects of substrate metabolism in humans. The book is a pleasure to read, especially the discussions which are always brisk, sometimes even acerbic, and convey an immediacy that makes one feel a participant at the meeting itself. This is a subject on the threshold of new developments and the information brought together in this book will prove helpful to anyone who has an interest in metabolic events.

RF MAHLER

Erythrocyte Membranes 2. Recent Clinical and Experimental Advances. Progress in Clinical and Biological Research vol 56. Ed Walter C Kruckeberg, John W Eaton and George J Brewer. (Pp 290; illustrated; £21.90.) Alan R Liss. 1981.

Because of pressure of work it was some time after receiving this book before I could read it. However, I found so many interesting new facts and ideas in it that it kept me up half the night! It is a Pandora's box of fifteen complex, but enlightening, reports on erythrocyte membranes of animals and man. As a haematologist I particularly enjoyed the contributions on the membrane skeleton in hereditary elliptocytosis, membrane asymmetry in sickle cells, the deformability of isolated erythrocytic membranes, the lectin control of membrane shape in discocyte $\rightleftharpoons$ echinocyte equilibria, and changes in sialic acid in senescence of red cells. Possibly more basic genetic data of the elliptocytic subjects would have improved the presentation and the discussions, though usually pertinent, were occasionally a little "loose", for example the mention of "hematuria" in marathons on page 169 (surely haemoglobinuria). However, this book is highly recommended to medical school libraries, progressive departments of haematology, and biochemists in general.

HB GOODALL