Although there are adequate numbers of figures the illustrations have been reduced to a minimum, presumably to keep down the cost and it is here that the only criticism can be made. Black and white reproductions of cells are never satisfactory; however one feels that greater attention could have been given to the quality of the photomicrographs chosen and to the way in which the legends were composed. Unfortunately not all of the photographs are typical examples of the abnormality to be demonstrated and it is hoped that if the publication goes into a second edition, as it probably will, that some improvement can be made.

The size chosen by the publishers is unfortunate: it is neither a pocket book nor is it of standard textbook size. This may have been dictated by economy, but the material would have been enormously enhanced by being laid out on a larger page with a larger type. This book deserves to become a standard reference for all students in the clinical period. It would also form a useful addition to the library of junior medical staff in hospital.

D. G. CHALMERS


There is considerable variation in blood transfusion practice in different centres in the United States, but this book describes the procedures adopted by the American National Red Cross Service where the standards are very similar to those of the British National Blood Transfusion Service. The American Red Cross Service does not pay its donors, but operates a credit system for future blood transfusions for the donor and his family. The authors clearly favour a voluntary system.

The book spans the whole field of transfusion practice from the selection of donors to the ultimate use of blood and blood products. For this reason, it will probably find greatest application in those countries where doctors and technicians find themselves responsible for organizing both the blood donor service and the hospital blood bank. The authors make no pretence of the fact that in covering such a wide spectrum, they are unable to cater for the specialist.

Anyone starting up a blood donor service would be well advised to follow the criteria laid down for the selection and care of donors. The three chapters on laboratory methods are excellent and describe practically all the techniques used by modern-day serologists, but a separate section on the investigation of the autoimmune haemolytic anaemias would have been an advantage. While the recommendations are to a high standard, there are some with which we cannot agree. For example, few British serologists would read antiglobulin reactions under the microscope. Furthermore, we cannot accept the argument for ignoring the antigens C and E in D-negative donor blood on the basis that C and E are low-grade antigens. In Britain it is generally agreed that donors are only declared truly Rh negative if they have the genotype CcEe. With such differences of opinion in mind, the book should be read critically by advanced students preparing themselves for examination in Great Britain.

The later chapters dealing with the use of blood and blood products could be read with profit by clinicians.

W. J. JENKINS


This book aims, largely successfully, to present a scheme of laboratory investigation for the bleeding and coagulation disorders suitable for use in any hospital laboratory. The theoretical background of clotting and platelets and fibrinolysis is sketched in, followed by a rather diffuse discussion of when each test is appropriate. The recommended techniques are well described in 50 pages, but include elastography and Chandler's tube, which is not for 'any hospital', and also a number of techniques which the author herself does not recommend. In general this is a useful, practical, up-to-date guide even if it does not break new ground.

J. R. O'BRIEN


Professor Yoffey has been the curator of the lymphatic system for the best part of 40 years and the two editions of 'Lymphatics, lymph and lymphoid tissues' have been standard books of reference since their publication in 1941 and 1956. Now, with the help of Professor Courtice, he has compiled an impressive volume which is more than just a third edition, as its size and change of title denote.

Roughly half the book is devoted to lymph and lymphatics, and one half to the lymphocyte and its relation to the bone marrow. The first half is less exciting but more satisfactory. Knowledge of lymphoid flows gently through uncontroversial channels, so that the chapters on lymph formation, composition and flow, and on the pathology of lymph will continue to stand as reliable reference points. The illustrations, which include lymphograms, stereoscopic electron micrographs and many others, are well chosen to enhance the text.

Meanwhile the turbulent and unpredictable lymphocyte is less easily subjected to textbook treatment. The text was compiled in November 1969 and already begins to look dated. Thus although there is much discussion of the thymic and non-thymic origin of lymphocytes, the two-component hypothesis of the lymphoid system which, rightly or wrongly, underlines most recent work on lymphocyte populations, receives only passing attention. The functions of the lymphocyte are similarly referred to in a rather haphazard way, and, here again, recent progress has rapidly overtaken the authors.

There is much discussion of the significance of the bone-marrow lymphocyte and transitional cell with a fair but inconclusive summary of the evidence. All in all this latter section of the book must be judged by the perception of lines of progress and by the comprehensiveness of its survey. A text liberally studded with apposite questions and an abundance of references indicates a measure of success which will be particularly welcomed by the reference chaser. An essential book for the lymphatic student.

H. E. M. KAYE


This is another in the well known series of essays in verbal theoretical biology by Sir Macfarlane Burnet. They differ from the two usual forms of scientific review in one of which an author mobilizes the literature and his own series of experi-
ment studies for a particular concept, and in the other the published case for and against a particular view is contrasted. Here a circumstantial case is built up by making a one-sided selection from existing literature, without new experimental evidence, extrapolating far beyond the purposes for which most of the experiments were done. An apologia in the epilogue shows that the author is himself rather worried about the propriety of this, and the view that theoretical science is acceptable only if it has demonstrable mathematical integrity, as in theoretical physics, is disingenuously depreciated by his description of himself as 'wholly free of mathematical sophistication' (p. 129). We all have our patterns of thought, on which our work is based, and I think that biologists should publish only those which they have tested by experiment.

The book is therefore worrying in principle. It is also imperfect in practice. Nearly half the book is an account of specific immune responses, not needed by an immunologically informed reader, and misleading to others who may well be enticed by the broad implications claimed for the book (eg, the terms 'antibody' and 'immunglobulin' are not 'essentially synonymous' (p. 17) and it is neither 'axiomatic' nor correct to say that 'in health there is no immunological reaction against normal body components' (p. 46). Phylogeny of the immune response is outlined, apparently irrelevantly, and distorted accounts of various immunological phenomena, as, for instance, immunodeficiency (pp. 201 and 205), are cited in favour of views which they do not substantiate.

Finally, the concept of immunological surveillance is considered in the last 75 pages in three contexts, all so important for medicine that they may well entice a number of readers not equipped to be adequately critical—hence the justification for an adverse review in a general journal. The case in cancer is adequately but uncritically presented—this is now discussed as a likely, but not established phenomenon, in undergraduate teaching.

Diseases, uncritically and often insecurely classified as autoimmune, are then considered in this light, and, finally, a totally unsubstantiated claim is made for an immunopathological theory of aging. The style is wordy and repetitive, but there is a reference list of broad and exciting range. As a starting point in one of these fields an informed worker might achieve some stimulus—if only an irresistible urge to disprove some of the more unlikely assertions. But this book is educationally dangerous for the uninitiated, because it is misleading in fact and conducive of untidy and undisciplined thought.

J. F. SOOTHILL


The latest volume in what must be one of the oldest series of immunological reviews has six sections which can, of course, only cover some of the many recent advances in the subject. They are, however, critical and thoughtful reviews rather than annotated lists of recent publications.

The momentum given to the study of antibody structure by Porter's splitting of the gamma globulin molecule continues and so, unfortunately, does the apparent heterogeneity of antibodies. The chapters on myeloma proteins as analogues of antibodies and on synthesis and assembly of immunoglobulins both manage to avoid entanglement in the minutiae of chain amino acid sequences. They give current views on how immunoglobulins are put together and what they look like, although detailed knowledge of a specific combining site is still to come.

After a period of relative neglect macrophages are again closely though controversially related to antibody synthesis. The unresolved problems are well discussed. The need for cell cooperation is taken further in the chapter on immunocytes which discusses the functional diversity of lymphocytes. This is followed appropriately by a review of the biological effects of antilymphocyte serum.

Perhaps to remind readers that immune phenomena are usually responses to antigens, the final chapter is devoted to that most unpromising of allergens, house dust. As might be expected, house dust proves to be as heterogeneous as some of the factors already described.

This is a useful volume in a valuable series but it is aimed at the specialist. The general reader might learn a lot but he would have to work hard.

A. A. GLYNN


This book is written in Bulgarian so it could only be of very limited interest to this country. Nevertheless, British clinical pathologists should be made aware that first-class work is being done in Bulgaria. The book is well produced, and appears to be comprehensive and reasonably up to date in methodology and interpretations in chemical pathology, haematology, and clinical microscopy. About one third of its many references are to Eastern European publications.

D. N. BAROSSI


Yet again one is not disappointed by the published results of one of the Ciba Foundation's excellent symposia. On this occasion, as on so many previous ones, a group of people with widely different methods of approach to a difficult problem have presented their views. These have been recorded, not only in the form of papers, but of extensive and fairly un inhibited discussions and the results are excellent. Here is a mixture of old and new knowledge gained from various techniques ranging from the silver methods to electron microscopy. It is sad that it is 54 years since the condition was described by Alzheimer so little real understanding of the cause of the disease has been obtained, but much of what is known is to be found in this book. It will be most valuable to those psychiatrists, neurologists, and neuropathologists who want to be kept abreast of current work on this subject.

PETER DANIEL


This monograph fills a very real gap in surgical pathological literature and should be on the shelf of all pathologists and therapists dealing with disorders of the soft tissues. It fulfils the objects set out in the preface and the author is being modest.