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-

medical technology in modern hospital diagnosis, and undoubtedly this field now supports a very considerable world-wide industry which provides employment for a significant proportion of the world's scientists and technologists.

The appearance of the book is thus significant at this time, and is another milestone to add to others marking the applications of the physical sciences to medicine. In the introductory chapter, an eminent retired physician, Dr Marshall, capably reminisces over the milestones in the field which he has passed since his student days in 1907.

No fewer than seven pages are devoted to a 'Who's Who' of 34 well known clinicians and scientists, who must have been selected with some care, to contribute chapters on subjects ranging from the status of the hospital scientist through descriptions of instruments and techniques to a treatise on the manufacturers' viewpoint.

A book covering such a wide range of interests cannot of course cover any particular aspect in depth, and in this case the editors have achieved what might be called a 'state of the art' survey. It will prove valuable for students, for mature workers in medicine, and also for many interested in manufacture and sales. The book can be recommended both for fire-side reading and for reference purposes.

F. L. MITCHELL

Principles of Biological Chemistry By J. F. Ashby, D. I. Edwards, P. L. Lumb, and J. L. Tring. (Pp. ix + 191; illustrated. £3.00.) Scientific Publications. 1971. Oxford: Blackwell.

This is a volume written primarily for ordinary or higher national certificate science students studying medical laboratory science or applied biology and is intended to deal with the integration of chemistry, biology, and biochemistry. The content of biology is miniscule and the emphasis is clearly on chemistry. Beginning with an elementary introduction to atomic and molecular structure, the authors proceed to outline some of the fundamentals of physical and organic chemistry and conclude with a brief introduction to some of the basic concepts of biochemistry. The treatment throughout is simple and well illustrated, and special attention has been given to practical applications, and to the principles of techniques and methodology. In short, this

new volume makes a suitable primer for the training of junior medical laboratory technicians.

D. V. PARKE

The Planning and Organization of a Health Laboratory Service Fifth report of the WHO Expert Committee on Health Laboratory Services. *World Health Organization Technical Report Series*, 1972, No. 491. (Pp. 36. £0.40.) Available through HMSO, High Holborn, London WC2.

A meeting of experts convened by WHO in November 1971 considered the organization of laboratories in a health service. In a total of 36 pages it is not possible to do more than lay down some very general principles and recommendations although these will be of greatest value in guiding countries where the health service is not fully developed. Clinical pathologists will not find much that they do not already know, but may find it useful as a compressed reference to such matters as training, quality control, and general administrative structure.

H. E. M. KAY

Notices

Availability of Hemiglobincyanide Reference Preparation

An international hemiglobincyanide reference solution is prepared by the Rijks Instituut voor de Volksgezondheid, Bilthoven, the Netherlands, under the auspices of the International Committee for Standardization in Hematology (ICSH)¹. The project is sponsored by the Council of Europe and by the World Health Organization. The latter authority has established the solution as the International Hemiglobincyanide Reference Preparation².

It is available free of charge on request to national laboratories working in haematology or to interested individual workers, and is intended for checking the purity and content of hemiglobincyanide reference solutions to be used in the daily practice of haemoglobinometry.

It consists of an aqueous hemiglobincyanide solution equivalent to a haemoglobin content of approximately 60 g per 100 ml, dispensed in 10 ml ampoules and packed in boxes of six. It is tested and regularly checked by a number of control laboratories nominated by ICSH.

Further information may be obtained from Dr A. H. Holtz, secretary, ICSH Expert Panel on Haemoglobinometry, Rijks Instituut voor de Volksgezondheid, P.O. Box 1, Bilthoven, the Netherlands.

¹*Brit. J. Haemat.*, 13 (Suppl.), 1967.

²*Wld Hlth Org. techn. Rep. Ser.*, 348, 12, 86 (1968).

Host-Virus Reactions with Special Reference to Persistent Agents

The published proceedings of the Royal College of Pathologists' symposium on 'Host-virus reactions with special reference to persistent agents' will shortly be available from the Publishing Manager, *Journal of Clinical Pathology*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR, price £22.50 post free. All those who paid the registration fee for the meeting itself will receive a copy of the symposium. For members of the Royal College of Pathologists and members of the Association of Clinical Pathologists there is a concessionary rate of £1.75 post free.

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