

has to compete with several already well-established books of similar size and nature which are considerably cheaper.

V. MARKS

Developments in Biological Standardization, Vol 27. International Symposium on Purity of Human Plasma Proteins. Edited by R. H. Regamey, I. Joo, and W. Hennessen. (Pp. x + 274; 57 figs; 89 tables; £10.90.) Basel: Karger. 1974.

This volume is an interesting, informative, and up-to-date presentation of papers read at one of the periodical meetings on biological standardization. It is divided into reports on seven sessions. Four sessions deal with purities of various plasma protein fractions and preparations. Two are devoted to purification and production techniques, and one contains up-to-date and useful information on methodology and assay, as well as interpretation particularly in respect of immunoglobulins. One chapter is devoted to the problem of Australia antigens in plasma fractionation and the use of plasma derivatives. Topics of current interest contain information regarding antilymphocyte sera. I think this volume would be a useful item on the shelves of workers interested in this particular field.

J. KOHN

New Approaches to the Identification of Micro-organisms. Edited by Carl-Göran Heden and Tibor Illeni. (Pp. xxvi + 466; illustrated; £10.30.) New York, Chichester, Sydney, and Toronto: Wiley, 1975.

This is an account of a symposium held in Stockholm in June 1973, sponsored by UNESCO, WHO, and the International Organization for Biotechnology and Bio-engineering.

The papers read in this symposium fall into four sections. There is a section on automation in microbiology, one on the use of computers in dealing with microbiological data, one on computer analysis of epidemiological data, and a section dealing with simplified tests in microbiology. The latter contains papers on rapid diagnostic methods, chiefly in relation to *Enterobacteriaceae*, such as the Enterotube, Pathotec, Auxotab, and API systems, and also descriptions of certain multi-inoculation devices and miniaturized methods favoured by the authors. The general bacteriologist might find something of interest to him in this sec-

tion and also in the section on epidemiological surveillance which describes computer-assisted approaches to dealing with data derived from laboratory and field studies.

The remainder of the book deals mainly with automation in the microbiological laboratory and with computer-assisted identification of microorganisms and virus-infected cells, and is more of interest to the specialist in these fields. Complicated automatic equipment is described for inoculation, colony scanning, diffusion tests, and identification of metabolic reactions by colorimetry. Identification of microorganisms by electrical impedance curves, heat curves (microcalorimetry), gas-chromatography, pyrolysis and mass spectrometry is discussed. It is not suggested that any of these methods has as yet reached a stage of development such as to make them suitable for general use. They do, however, indicate present lines of investigation and the possible shape of things to come.

W. J. RYAN

The Mammalian Kidney: Biological Structure and Function 5. By D. B. Moffat. (Pp. viii + 263; illustrated; £9.00.) London: Cambridge University Press. 1975.

Professor Moffat and, incidentally, the editors of the 'Biological Structure and Function' series, are to be congratulated on this monograph on *The Mammalian Kidney*. It provides a critical and up-to-date synthesis of current views on a very complex subject, and everybody with an interest in renal disease will enjoy it and find it indispensable.

A major virtue of this monograph is its clarity. Moffat, with his wide experience in the field, has been able to write a well-balanced review, readable in that it is selective and yet clearly representative of the world literature on the kidney. This has been achieved by the omission of data of an empirical nature, for example, in cytochemistry, where so many published observations have no obvious functional significance. A particular virtue, too, of this monograph, is the careful and critical analysis of the experimental methods used in renal investigations. In short, it admirably complements the clinical and pathological textbooks written respectively by de Wardener and Heptinstall. The three make a triad of which anglophone medicine should be extremely proud. I

only wish I had had access to three such books over 30 years ago.

J. C. SLOPER