The Cellular Basis of the Immune Response.
By Edward S. Golub. (Pp. x + 278; illustrated; £6 50.) Massachusetts: Sinauer
1977.

When in 1965 at an Antibody Workshop meeting Seymour Benzer was driven to
declare 'at last immunology has become a
science' (on hearing the results of Norbert
Hilschmann's analysis of the amino-acid
sequence of two Bence Jones proteins with
their constant and variable regions),
little did he realise that in the ensuing
douzen years, despite tremendous strides,
the 'science' was to pose more questions
than it was to answer.

The historic (1970's?) experiments which
have been employed in answering the
questions to date are fully exploited in this
text, making for compelling reading.

This book is divided into four sections;
two, dealing with cell cooperation and the
regulation of the immune response, both
so much in the forefront of this advancing
science, benefit enormously from the
author's declared interest and obvious
enthusiasm.

Each chapter takes the form of a
lecture, introduced by an 'overview'; the
topic is then developed, employing the key
experiments critical for each new concept
with a profusion of simple but precise
diagrams. The chapter closes with a
summary and an excellent bibliography.

A rather brief account of the lympho-
kines, including MIF tests, was a
disappointment.

Intended as a review of the experimental
basis of immunology, Professor Golub's
book succeeds like no other and is right up
to date. It is essential reading for students
of immunology and medicine and science-
tists working in related fields. As background
reading for all physicians managing the
expanding field of immunological
disease it can be thoroughly recommended.

I hope the success that this book will
surely have leads to a second volume on
clinical immunology, perhaps multi-
author but hopefully under the firm
editorship of Edward Golub, whose style
is so appealing.

H. GRANT PRENTICE

Breast Cancer. Progress in Clinical and
Biological Research. Volume 12. Edited by
Albert C. W. Montague, G. L. Stonesifer,
and E. F. Lewison. Associate Editors:
W. T. Bessler, R. S. Handley, P.
Siegenthaler, and E. Witkin. (Pp. 549;
illustrated; $38.00.) New York: Alan R.
Liss. 1977.

I read this volume with mixed enthusiasm,
influenced by the rather uninspired fore-
word which opens with the unhelpful and
patently incorrect statement that 'notable
improvements in the cure rates of
breast cancer have not been attained over the past 75 years' and mis-
spells the great Halsted's name wrongly
not once, but twice.

The book represents the proceedings of
an international breast cancer conference
held in Lucerne in the summer of 1976.
These are presented as a series of rather
disjointed contributions, often in abstract
form. In some instances the list of
references at the end of each chapter is
longer than the text itself. This being so,
the book must be taken for what it is,
namely, a reference volume rather than a
book on breast cancer.

There are 11 sections in the book,
incorporating 50 separate contributions.
Some of the sections are disappointingly
brief, such as that on adjuvant chemother-
apy, while others occupy a large part of
the book. The section on radiographic and
thermographic diagnosis occupies more
than 100 of the 550 pages in the volume.
Some of the earlier chapters on the biology
of breast cancer provide the most interest-
ing reading, and, in particular, there is a
stimulating account of biological markers
by Jean-Pierre Mach and his colleagues.
Jensen's chapter on hormone dependency
in breast cancer is also a most lucid
account of the topic. Some of the weaker
contributions occur in the section dealing
with treatment, but this is understandable
in view of the brevity of many of these
chapters.

This is a useful book but not an out-
standing one. On a point of production,
it is a pity that the type of print varies from
chapter to chapter. This makes for un-
comfortable reading and considerably
reduces the visual appeal of the book

IAN BURN

Notice

The Supraregional Assay Service Laboratories were set up on 1 January
1974 to offer rare and difficult assays to the hospital staffs of England, Wales,
and Northern Ireland (Scotland has its own administration). There are 26 such
laboratories, which cover the fields of peptide hormones, steroids, certain drugs,
specific proteins, lead and heavy metals, and tissue enzymes. The location of
the various laboratories, together with details and notes of the assays and their
significance, are given in the SAS booklet which has been distributed to laboratories
throughout the Regions.

The Directors of all the SAS laboratories met recently and formed a corporate
body designed to offer a source of specialist advice. Representatives of various other
clinical and scientific professional organisations will be invited to serve on the
Committee to provide a body of opinion which can enter into dialogue with the
DHSS, Regional, and Area Authorities.

The Committee will be concerned with furthering the objectives of the SAS as a
whole, particularly the maintenance of high standards of assay performance,
quality control, the preparation and supply of scarce reagents, and defining the scope
of the service.

The Chairman of the new Committee is Professor W. R. Butt (Birmingham), the
Vice-Chairman is Professor J. R. Hobbs (London), and the Secretary is Mr W. B.
Yeoman (Regional Toxicology Laboratory, Dudley Road Hospital, Birmingham
B18 7OH; telephone 021-554 3801).