Publications of the present sort suffer from three disadvantages—first, there is the scatter of topics and the limited amount of information; second, the information rapidly becomes out-of-date, because the data are subsequently published in a more definitive form; and, third, the high cost renders the information relatively inaccessible. Nevertheless, this volume may tempt a clinician with an interest in research to become an immunologist.

G. L. ASHERSON

Tumour virus infections and immunity

Edited by R. L. Crowell, H. Friedman and J. E. Prier. 1976. Baltimore, London, Tokyo: University Park Press. Pp xii and 271. £12.25.

This book contains the proceedings of a symposium held in Philadelphia during two days in April 1975. It contains 16 chapters covering a range of topics in the field of tumour-virus interactions with animal cells *in vitro* and *in vivo*, but is mainly concerned with the immunological phenomena associated with these interactions. The RNA tumour-viruses and herpes viruses receive most attention, and only one chapter is devoted to a small DNA tumour-virus. In this, Croce deals with the association of SV₄₀ genome with human chromosome 7. An obvious disadvantage of a collection of contributions such as this is that almost all the data will have been published elsewhere before the book appears. Nevertheless, the information is often presented in a more assimilable form and in association with contributions that augment and complement each other. It is a book for the specialist and more particularly the specialist on the immunological aspects of tumour virology. A welcome inclusion, not often encountered in books of this type, is a useful index.

I. A. MACPHERSON

Modern methods in medical microbiology. Systems and trends

Edited by J. E. PRIER, JOSEPHINE BARTOLA and H. FRIEDMAN. 1976. Baltimore, London and Tokyo: University Park Press. Pp. xviii and 201. £9.25.

Compared with other aspects of pathology, especially chemical pathology and haematology, many of the techniques used routinely in medical microbiology have changed little since the early days of this century. Recently, however, efforts have been made by microbiologists and others in various parts of the world to harness developments in the physical sciences to the needs of microbiology. This has come about partly because of increasing numbers of specimens sent to hospital and public health laboratories and partly because of a growing appreciation of the need for better control and standardisation of routine procedures.

"Modern methods in medical microbiology" is based on the proceedings of a symposium held in November 1974 and sponsored mainly by the Eastern Pennsylvania Branch of the American Society of Microbiology. It has been written essentially for clinical microbiologists and technicians with the object of providing clear practical descriptions of new methods in clinical microbiology, advice on how to evaluate them and how to decide which ones to use in particular circumstances. It is claimed that the book covers major new developments that may contribute to future advances, and that it defines their limitations and comparative advantages. How far these aims have been achieved is a matter of judgement, and judgement is difficult at the present time in such a rapidly developing field. Even so, this book would seem to serve a useful purpose if only to indicate where frontiers are being expanded.

The contributions vary a good deal in quality and especially in their standard of writing. Some of the earlier ones tend to be parochial and anecdotal but others are of considerably more general interest and wider relevance.

After an interesting introduction by John C. Sherris which laudably stresses the need to maintain clinical relevance in medical microbiology, the book is divided into four parts. The first deals with the role of regulating agencies in the USA, in particular how the Food and