BOOKS RECEIVED

Microbes and human carcinogenesis

By M. J. HILL. 1986. Edward Arnold, London. Pp. 162. £25.00.

This book summarises one man's view of the role of various microbes in human carcinogenesis. It starts with an overview of the mechanisms of carcinogenesis and carcinogenic factors produced by various groups of microbes, then concentrates on the evidence that links microbes with cancers of various sites in the body, namely the stomach, small and large bowel, gall bladder, breast, endometrium, liver, bladder and cervix. The introduction is, perhaps, not sufficiently detailed for most readers, although good references are included. The later chapters are more interesting and bring together scattered aspects of the subject in a very readable form with some thought-provoking conclusions. However, some parts are rather simplistic in their approach, especially the consideration of the association of viruses with human tumours. No molecular aspects are covered, and no space is allotted to oncogenes. It is difficult to understand the exclusion of oncogenes in particular, especially as oncogene activation may unify mechanisms of chemical and viral carcinogenesis.

MARY NORVAL

Hybridoma technology

An annotated listing of papers 1975-1985

By ROBIN NICHOLAS. 1986. Mansell Publishing Ltd, London and New York. Pp. xv and 198. £25.00.

This small book is like a well-informed and very patient colleague opening his/her filing cabinet to the reader. About 500 selected from the first 10 000 publications on monoclonal antibody technology are arranged in a sensible classification, and there is an index. For each reference, there is a 50–100-word annotation, in a uniform style; not merely an abstract but describing the practical implications and historical context—often when these might not be apparent to the newcomer. A scarcity of adverse criticism arises from the selection for quality, and, as an individual observer, I found most of my own trusted papers.

The applications aspect is restricted to the clinical and veterinary fields but this is not a severe deficiency because of the generality of the methods. This book will be read in the library by the generalist wishing to have a realistic grasp of essentials and very much by those wishing to exploit monoclonal antibody technique for the first time. However, at £25 it will not often reside on the laboratory desk of the experienced practitioner, to whom it will be helpful to fill gaps in their own coverage of the literature and to stimulate new approaches; could publishers find a way to present such practically useful books in a much cheaper, if less elegant, format?

M. STOCK-DUNNE