read but it deals in an imaginative way with a central problem and should find a wide readership among immunological research workers.

G. L. ASHERSON

The biology of the nocardiae

Edited by M. GOODFELLOW, G. H. BROWNELL and J. A. SERRANO. 1976. London: Academic Press. Pp. xvii and 517. £15.00.

The medical microbiologist will find only two or three chapters of interest. The book has been written largely by and for taxonomists and reflects the disagreement and diversity of viewpoint one expects in the infancy of a complex subject. In fairness to the editors it should be said that almost all the experts available have been recruited and that the references, although uncritically chosen, are numerous. They have therefore provided a useful service for any worker considering research on the actinomycetes. The general bacteriologist seeking help with a rare problem may be disappointed but at least the array of 36 contributors enables him to select an appropriate specialist for consultation. Apart from pure taxonomy, the contents deal with morphology, cell wall composition, lipid content, antigens and serological procedures, phages, genetic studies, DNA analysis, ecology, iron-binding, pathogenesis, chemotherapy and finally, general metabolism.

J. MARKS

Severe measles

By D. MORLEY. 1976. Teaching aids at low cost (TALC). London: Institute for Child Health. Pp. 6 (text) and 24 colour slides. Unmounted set, £1.35. In plastic file and folder, £2.43. Slide and tape set, £9.72.

Probably few British doctors realise that measles may be so severe in degree and so unusual in its clinical manifestations that it can be mistaken for smallpox. This is particularly the case in, for example, malnourished African children, and the heavy mortality in outbreaks in West Africa may rival that seen in cities like Glasgow, Munich or Vienna 60 years ago. In fact, a study of severe measles like that made by Dr Morley and his colleagues over the past decade or two has much that is instructive about measles in general. All this has been incorporated in a set of slides with accompanying legends, prepared by TALC (Teaching Aids at Low Cost), a unit at the Institute of Child Health of the University of London. The slides include clinical photographs, tables and diagrams, and may be obtained at three different prices according to the manner of presentation. There are lower prices for developing countries. This set of slides is an informative, clear and impressive piece of communication and must represent some of the best value in medical teaching in the world.

A. P. WATERSON