gastroenteritis, a muddle which has for years confounded rational management of infant diarrhoea. Two recommendations in the section on endocarditis are especially unfortunate. It is, in practice, almost never possible to give dental treatment to a patient with endocarditis at the moment when treatment is started, and their recommendation is bound to perpetuate the common and misguided practice of doing dental treatment at exactly the wrong time, i.e., in patients who have a resistant mouth flora and fresh unepithelialised vegetations. Another comment in this chapter is also unfortunately conducive to bad practice. While warning against the dangers of indwelling venous catheters, they recommend this method for initial treatment of endocarditis. I believe it is quite wrong to use this method in endocarditis unless it is needed for haemodynamic reasons or for intravenous feeding. Butterfly or similar needles, each used for a short period, should be employed and the risk of superinfection thus entirely avoided.

I picked up this book with great eagerness and enthusiasm for its aims. It is sad that so much space has been taken up with potted clinical information that often perpetuates tired old textbook fallacies, that so many recommendations are misleading or dated, and that the real gap which the authors so perceptively discern remains unfilled.

H. P. LAMBERT

Editorial note. The publishers have asked us to draw attention to the need for an important correction on page 279 under the heading **Treatment**, line 5. The words "or intravenously" should be deleted. A corrected edition of the book is now available.

Medical mycology

By MARY P. ENGLISH. 1980. Edward Arnold, London. Pp. 57. £2.50.

Medical mycology is all too frequently ignored or given only scanty attention by clinicians and laboratory workers.

The importance of fungal diseases is, however, becoming more apparent especially in immunocompromised patients. Mary English gives a brief and refreshing introduction to fungal diseases in man, discussing not only infections but also allergic reactions to fungi, mycetism and mycotoxicosis. The book, which is one of the Institute of Biology's studies in biology, is, as the preface states, a suitable account for readers with no previous mycological knowledge. It is not a textbook on the diagnosis and treatment of fungal disease but is a useful introduction for clinical and laboratory workers to medical mycology.

R. Y. CARTWRIGHT

Antifungal chemotherapy

Edited by D. C. E. SPELLER. 1980. John Wiley and Sons, Chichester. Pp. xi and 446. £28.00.

This is the first book to be devoted entirely to antifungal chemotherapy and its attendant problems. Its timely publication reflects the growing interest in fungi as a cause of disease in man and recent advances in the treatment of these infections brought about by improvements to the range of antifungal drugs.

The book is divided into three sections. The first deals with antifungal agents and contains chapters on the polyenes, flucytosine, the imidazoles, griseofulvin and assorted other antifungals. Information is given on chemical and physical properties, pharmacology and toxicology, spectrum of activity, mode of action and in-vitro and in-vivo activity, including aspects of clinical use. The second section is on the treatment of mycoses and forms a useful practical guide to the management of these infections. Problems of diagnosis and treatment are fully discussed and, where appropriate, the possibility of prophylaxis. There is a general introductory chapter followed by detailed chapters on the treatment of superficial and subcutaneous mycoses, systemic mycoses caused by specific pathogens such as histoplasmosis and coccidioidomycosis, and two chapters on opportunistic fungal infections, one of which deals specifically with infections in the immunosuppressed patient. The final section has a chapter on the

laboratory control of antifungal therapy. This deals with the methods available for sensitivity testing and the assay of antifungal drugs in body fluids, and provides a comprehensive practical account of how to perform the tests and interpret the results.

The individual chapters, written by acknowledged experts, give a detailed and up-to-date account of the subject, have an extensive bibliography, and are preceded by a useful contents section that facilitates reference. There is some duplication of material between chapters, but this is inevitable if each is to be self-contained. For a multi-author publication it has a pleasing uniformity of style and presentation throughout.

This practically orientated book is a valuable reference work. It is essential reading for clinicians and laboratory workers with a special interest in fungal infections and it is also recommended to those who occasionally encounter clinical mycological problems.

E. G. V. EVANS