The author quotes a very large number of references from journals in many languages, thus giving the reader an opportunity of assessing the work in this complex field of study. Unfortunately the book has neither an index nor an alphabetical list of the authors quoted. A short summary at the end of each chapter would have been useful.

K. A. BETTELHEIM

Medical microbiology in the tropics

By E. NNOCHIRI. 1975. London: Oxford University Press. Pp. 386. £6.00.

Dr Nnochiri has attempted the formidable task of providing, over the whole area of this vast subject, information on every microbiological topic sufficient for the needs of medical students, health workers and nurses working in a tropical environment. The manner of presentation of this volume, and parts of its content, invite criticism. The line diagrams are as dispiriting as they are limited, and the content of some sections, for example, those on lymphogranuloma venereum and brucellosis, and the laboured introductory chapter, leave much to be desired. However, other sections are admirably concise and apt for the topics covered: laboratory procedures, the microbiology of water supplies, milk and food, and certain of the sections dealing with the clinical relevance of bacteriology to disease. It must be admitted, however, that the systematic approach used here is not always suitable.

On the other hand, this volume has undoubted merit. The task of complete coverage of the subject is tackled with obvious enthusiasm, and a selection of material is made that is generally appropriate to the needs of those for whom the volume is written. Postgraduates may also find this book useful in some circumstances, though they may be disturbed by the lack of guidance given to those who will have to choose between the many alternative methods described.

This book will run to more editions. Perhaps the need for offering guidance to the judgment of the reader will be given priority in future revisions.

J. GRANT

Infectious multiple drug resistance

By S. FALKOW. 1975. London: Pion Limited. Pp. 300. £7.70.

A book of this type is long overdue, and the author has extensive experience of the laboratory facets of the subject. He has also an appreciation of the ecological significance of bacterial plasmid activity, and is sufficiently close to that aspect to justify his treatment of it. The result is a book that is valuable to microbial geneticists at all levels, to molecular biologists, to medical and veterinary microbiologists and to clinicians. There are also chapters that could be read with advantage by administrators in public health and veterinary medicine.

The title is a misnomer. The book deals not only with infectious ("transferable" is better) drug resistance, but also covers bacterial plasmid genetics and activity in general, and in considerable detail. However, perhaps this title will be better for sales than a more academic one, and the book deserves to be widely read. The style is rather colloquial, but this makes the content easy to absorb.

There is one rather serious drawback. The references are not identified precisely in the text but are given under subject lists at the end of each chapter. In a book of this calibre, all references should be accurately indicated in the text, so that they can be related to the full references at the end of the chapter, or of the book.

There are, of course, other faults. The terms f_i^+ and f_i^- are used almost as though they were synonymous with F-like and I-like. We know enough about these properties and their presence in various plasmid compatibility-groups to make this bad practice. Compatibility-group O is given a priority it does not deserve over group B, with which it is identical and which was described over a year earlier than O. Not enough space is given to the Mexican chloramphenicol-resistant strain of the typhoid bacillus, to the enormous