Immuno-catalysis, by M. G. SEVAG. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Ill. 2nd edition, 1951. 547 + XX pages. price $ 12.00.

After the welcome reception accorded to the first edition of this most interesting book recommendation of this second edition would hardly seem to be necessary. For those not yet acquainted with Dr. SEVAG's work, however, some discussion is indicated. The author's point of departure has been the analogy between immunological and enzyme reactions. The recognition of this analogy is not of recent date; immunologists have already been aware of it for more than half-a-century. However, the original concept was founded on a faulty comparison. Dr. SEVAG has now set up the analogy on a proper base. In his concept "the specificity of an antibody molecule is the consequence of specific cellular processes catalytically modified by an antigen to conform with the configuration of certain active groups of the antigenic molecule". In the terminology of enzyme reactions the antigen has the rôle of the enzyme, the antibody precursors take the place of the substrate and the specific antibody conforms with the specifically inhibitive reaction products.

To build up his theory the author proceeds to marshal all the pertinent experimental data scattered through biochemical and immunological literature, and in doing so testifies to his profound reading in both fields. His approach is such that the biochemists with only a hazy knowledge of immunology as well as the immunologist who is not conversant with the development of modern biochemistry have no difficulty in following the subject under discussion after being introduced to it by the author. A summing-up of the six parts into which the book is divided gives some idea of the material covered: Antigens as biocatalysts; mechanism of antibody formation: antibody as a specific enzyme inhibitor; anti-enzyme immunity; antibodies against respiratory enzymes: physiology and biochemistry of shock.

The book is well-written and pleasant to read. Most refreshing is the complete lack of bias; of each point under discussion the arguments for and against it are presented most fairly. Many experiments are discussed at some length, permitting the reader to form his own opinion. The references, numbering over one thousand, greatly add to the value of the book. A few small typographical errors (mostly in some formulae) do not mar its favourable appearance.

In the reviewer's opinion biochemists who are not yet acquainted with this work would certainly profit by reading it attentively.

ELIZABETH P. STEYN-PARVÉ (Utrecht)

Advances in Cancer Research, edited by J. P. GREENSTEIN AND A. HADDOW. Academic Press Inc., New York, 1953. 590 pages. $ 12.

This is the first volume of an annual series of summaries on the progress of our knowledge in the field of experimental cancer research.

Prominent research-workers from various countries give a survey of their particular fields.

C. A. COULSON: Electronic Configuration and Carcinogenesis.

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The multeity of the problems of experimental cancer research, as well as the multeity of the remedies and methods that are used in the research, appears clearly from this survey.

These summaries are of the utmost value for cancer research workers.

O. MÜHLBOCK (Amsterdam)