Book Review

_Cancer and the Immune Response._ By G. A. Currie. Edward Arnold. Price £4.25.

Not even in medicine can we escape from the influence of fashion, and there can be no doubt that immunity in relation to malignant disease is highly fashionable at the moment. As so often happens with new techniques, the use of immunotherapy in human malignant disease has been instituted before the scientific background has been established. Indeed, immunotherapy is already used extensively in the U.S.A. in the treatment of a variety of malignancies, and is becoming increasingly in vogue in the United Kingdom. There is no doubt that tumour-associated antigens exist in animal tumours and probably in many human tumours, and that the host is capable of reacting against them, but the best way of augmenting such responses is still far from clear. For this reason a critical analysis of all aspects of immunity to cancer could make a valuable contribution to medical thought and practice, and Dr Currie’s monograph does just this.

It is no mean task to combine a balanced appraisal of established facts with an interpretation of the clinical results obtained so far, both in relation to immune diagnosis and treatment. This has been achieved in this clearly written book, and its brevity should act as a model for other authors. In addition, the bibliography is excellent; it is comprehensive but not so extensive that it is unmanageable. This book will be readily understood by physicians, whatever their specialty, and anyone contemplating work in this field should buy it.

G.H.F.