Histological Typing of Soft Tissue Tumours. International Histological Classification of Tumours: No. 3. By F. M. ENZINGER, Head, WHO International Reference Centre for the Histological Definition and Classification of Soft Tissue Tumours; in collaboration with R. LATTES, Professor of Surgical Pathology, Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, U.S.A.; H. TORLONI, Medical Officer, Cancer, WHO, Geneva; and pathologists in fourteen countries. 24 cm. × 16 cm. Pp. 119, with 150 figures in colour and an accompanying set of 152 colour transparencies. 1969. Geneva: World Health Organization. Obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office. Price £15.

This book is one of a series on the histological classification of tumours prepared under the auspices of the World Health Organisation (the two previous volumes being on lung and breast tumours). Further volumes are in preparation which will eventually embrace the entire range of human tumour pathology. The main purpose of this series is "to develop histological definitions of cancer types and to facilitate the wide adoption of a uniform nomenclature".

This volume on soft-tissue tumours fulfils this aim splendidly. A distinguished panel of pathologists from many countries gives the work an authority which few could challenge. Each tumour is given a brief paragraph of description and is illustrated by one or two colour photomicrographs which are in general well chosen and of good quality. Colour transparencies of each of the illustrations are distributed with the book. The soft tissues considered are those of orthopaedic interest including the non-skeletal connective tissues, muscles and peripheral nerves.

The differentiation of tumours on the basis of histological appearances alone is an exercise of limited value. It is disappointing that no references are included which would guide the reader in a wider study of the conditions described. Despite this deficiency there is no doubt that this book will provide a valuable work of reference which should do much to promote uniformity of nomenclature of tumours throughout the world. The further publication in this series, particularly the volume on bone tumours, will be welcomed by pathologists and orthopaedic surgeons.—J. CHALMERS.

Plastics in Surgery. By Bernard BLOCH, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S., Honorary Orthopaedic Surgeon, Sydney Hospital, Sydney, Australia; and Garth W. HASTINGS, Ph.D., B.Sc., Th.L., A.R.I.C., M.R.S.H., Senior Lecturer in Polymer Science, University of New South Wales, Kensington, Australia. Formerly Senior Scientific Officer, United Kingdom Ministry of Aviation. Foreword by Sir H. W. MELVILLE, K.C.B., D.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.S. 24 cm. × 16 cm. Pp. x+187, with 9 figures and 2 tables. Index. 1967. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher. Price \$10.75.

In the practice of surgery various foreign materials are used which may be buried in or applied to the surface of the body, and plastics are very valuable in this connection. However, they may be used improperly, because either the surgeon is not aware of their properties or the polymer chemist does not appreciate the special influence of the biological environment. The authors of this book deal usefully and informatively with both these problems. They discuss at length the structure of thermoplastic and thermosetting polymers and point to the relationship between purely synthetic materials and those of biological origin. As they point out, for the polymer chemist to suggest suitable materials, the chemico-physical factors operating in the environment over a prolonged period must be known in some detail. The surgical applications of specific polymers and the problems which have occurred are discussed. Mistakes may be prevented if those who wish to use a plastic material for a particular application first carefully examine the literature that is listed in the bibliography of this book for each type of polymer.

One section deals with bioplasts—plastic materials prepared from high molecular weight substances of biological origin. Examples of such materials are fibrin films and foam, reconstituted collagen, alginates and cellulosic products. Another useful section deals with the sterilisation of plastic materials and a table gives the most suitable method for various polymers.

Much has been said about the toxicity of plastic materials. The toxicity of a material used for a particular purpose in the human body is difficult to evaluate by means of animal experiment, because the mechanical conditions required for breakdown of the polymer may not be operating. Many believe that toxicity is synonymous with the liberation of harmful chemical agents. For example, an undesirable tissue reaction may result from the abrasion of apparently acceptable polymers, with the production of particulate material. Then it seems that the tissue response is directly relatable to the size and shape of the particles.

There is no evidence in man that any of the polymers that have been implanted in the body have been associated with neoplastic changes in the surrounding or in distant tissues. There have been few reports of an undesirable tissue reaction which can be attributed to the chemical constituents of higher