Kanare, H.M.: **Writing the Laboratory Notebook.** - American Chemical Society, Washington 1985. 145 pp.

Have you ever read "Arrowsmith" of Sinclair Lewis ? If not, do it, please, for your benefit. In chapter 4 prof. Gottlieb underlines the importance of perfect notes for progress in science. This importance is also the main thread of the reviewed volume, first published in 1985 and reprinted a few times. Its purpose is to learn students (and in many cases also teachers and researchers) why and how to keep detailed notes of their experiments.

The rather voluminous paperback on the subject contains eight chapters. In the first one the basic question (why) and the basic forms are explained (bound notebook is better than a loose-leaf binder; scrupulous scientists usually reach priority of discoveries; legal obligations must be met). Chapter 2 is on necessary hardware that ensures the longevity of research notes (permanent paper, good quality pencils, pens, inks, glues, tapes - lists of recommended U.S. manufacturers are in appendices). Legal and ethical aspects are discussed next (chapter 3), *i.e.* employment agreements, ownership, obligations. In chapter 4 practices for issuance, use and storage of notebooks are shown (note the three-page instructions from an industrial laboratory notebook on pp. 37-39). Chapter 5 shows how to organize and write the notebook (table of contents, preface, list of abbreviations, experimental plan, observations, recorded values, drawings, graphs, records produced by devices, recording ideas, literature surveys). Chapter 6 brings examples of notebook entries (20 pages !). Chapter 7 is on patents and invention protection, and chapter 8 on the electronic notebook (the advantages and disadvantages of handwritten and computer-based notebooks are compared). The appendices give (*1*) suggestions for teaching laboratory notekeeping in grammar schools, high schools and colleges, (*2*) photographs from the historical notebooks of seven famous scientists (Leonardo da Vinci, M. Faraday, A. Fleming, *etc.*). The volume ends with a detailed subject index.

The author correctly asks for extensive teaching of how to write a laboratory notebook as a basis of any research, at least in natural science. He does not forget any detail, gives many examples in both the text and the figures. To me who tries (mostly in vain) to introduce the subject "scientific communication" (I mean by this term all the procedures of scientific work starting with literature reading and experimenting and ending with ready papers, posters, lectures and monographs) as obligatory lectures at the Czech universities, this book seems to be too long and containing too many details. But the author's text is readable and, as already said, nothing has been forgotten. Hence I hope that the book will be published in a new revised edition.

Z. ŠESTÁK (*Praha*)