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The July 1969 Issue

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- Letters to the Editor
- The Association of Clinical Pathologists: 82nd General Meeting
- Book reviews/Notices

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cians dislike most, namely, calculations, has been largely eliminated and consequently morale has improved. An 80 to 90% saving in time at the calculation stage of a number of laboratory procedures has been achieved and should result in about 200 technician hours annually being available for additional analytical work. The greatest benefit, however, is the increased reliability of results, directly through the minimizing of errors in calculation and indirectly through statistical control procedures which the machine facilitates. In AutoAnalyzer work, improved laboratory accuracy can be achieved mainly through the opportunity to examine peaks more carefully without any reduction in work output. While technicians will normally take one second or less to examine a peak, there is no incentive to hurry when using the Programma because the keyboard is locked for the five seconds during which the computation takes place, and the incidence of reading errors is consequently reduced.

The Programma 101 has proved more valuable than had been originally anticipated. Not only can it be used as a programmed calculator for repetitive work, but it can be used in the manual mode for single calculations. However, when more than a few calculations are required, it is advantageous to write a program. For most procedures this presents little difficulty and for this reason its applications and utilization should increase. For the average size laboratory in which sophisticated computer facilities are unlikely to be available for some time, the computerized desk calculator appears to be a useful acquisition.

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 16 A Guide to Automation in Clinical Chemistry. May 1969. P. M. G. BROUGHTON 12s. 6d. (\$1.50.)
 17 Flame Photometers. P. WILDING. (To be published soon.)

teriodes, although the comparatively harmless *Veillonella* gets a mention.

One serious error is the statement that antibiotic cover for people at risk of bacterial endocarditis should be given *before* as well as during and after dental treatment: this has been shown to be dangerous. In the chapter on collection of specimens no mention is made of transport medium.

In subjects outside the main stream of clinical studies brief books such as this can be a great help. If in future editions the dead wood is rigorously pruned and the clinical laboratory methods are brought up to date the book could not only be a prop to the student in examinations but a useful source of bacteriological knowledge relevant to his clinical work.

There are 11 black and white photographs and several line drawings, and at 20s. it is good value and a useful addition to the Lecture Notes series.

E. J. STOKES

A LABORATORY MANUAL ON ABNORMAL HAEMOGLOBINS
2nd ed. By J. H. P. Jonxis and T. H. J. Huisman. (Pp. 126; 30s.) Blackwell. 1968.

Great progress has been made in this field since the publication of the first edition of Jonxis and Huisman's book 10 years ago. This new volume is therefore most welcome. The book begins with a short general introduction to the haemoglobinopathies. The description of the physicochemical methods used in the investigation of these conditions occupies most of the book. The final section contains more general haematological techniques such as the osmotic fragility test.

The many techniques given in this book makes it invaluable for the discerning and experienced worker, but there is a possibility that the beginner may be somewhat confused by the choice of methods available to him. This book will be welcome in any laboratory interested in abnormal haemoglobins.

R. G. HUNTSMAN

Notices

PRIZE IN BIOCHEMICAL ANALYSIS

This award is endowed with DM 10,000, and will be distributed every two years on the occasion of the 'Tagung Biochemische Analytik' for outstanding publications in the field of biochemical analysis. For the first award to be presented during the next conference (29 April to 2 May 1970) in Munich, papers which have been published or have been accepted for publication during the period 1 January 1968 to 31 December 1969, should be sent in triplicate before 15 January 1970 at the latest to: PD Dr H. Schivelbein, Tagung Biochemische Analytik, Sekretariat, Nussbaumstr. 20, 8000 München 15, Germany.

INTERNATIONAL HAEMOGLOBINCYANIDE REFERENCE SOLUTION

The International Haemoglobincyanide Reference Solution, which is prepared by the Rijks Instituut voor de Volksgezondheid, Utrecht, the Netherlands, under the auspices of the International Committee for Standardization in Haematology (ICSH), and issued in May 1965 as a project sponsored by the Council of Europe¹, has recently been established by the World Health Organisation as the International Haemoglobincyanide Reference Preparation². It is available free of charge on request to national laboratories working in haematology or to interested individual workers, and is intended for checking the purity and content of haemoglobincyanide reference solutions to be used in the daily practice of haemoglobinometry.

It consists of an aqueous haemoglobincyanide solution equivalent to a haemoglobin content of approximately 60 mg per 100 ml, dispensed in 10 ml ampoules and packed in boxes of six. It is tested and regularly checked by a number of control laboratories nominated by ICSH.

Further information may be obtained from Dr A. H. Holtz, secretary, ICSH Expert Panel on Haemoglobino-metry, Rijks Instituut voor de Volksgezondheid, Utrecht the Netherlands.

¹*Brit. J. Haemat.*, 1967, 13 (suppl.), 71.

²*Wld. Hlth. Org. tech. Rep. Ser.*, 1968, 384