ture regulation and a normally low rate of metabolism tend to have a longer lifespan than others of like size.

For the pathologist, the unequal distribution of atherosclerosis in animals is of interest, and Bourlière believes that its role as a degenerative process in ageing phenomena has been greatly overestimated. The question of premature ageing in primitive communities clearly requires thorough investigation before it is too late. Professor T. Gillman's observations on nutritional siderosis in certain African communities provide an important lesson in this connexion.

Of the many fascinating subjects dealt with in this colloquium, Dr. F. J. Kallmann's studies on elderly twins are most revealing and show the overriding importance of inheritance. Deficiency states, both physical and mental, may, it seems, be gene-determined. The schizoid personality structure, he claims (1952), is that of a heterozygous carrier of the schizophrenic genotype with an inadequate degree of general constitutional resistance. But, if this makes depressing reading for the psychiatrist who has to treat schizophrenics, all readers who are getting on in years will be cheered to learn that mental fatigue, up to the age of 60 at any rate, may, contrary to expectations, actually become less with age.

W. H. McMENEY.

Dextran and its Use in Colloidal Infusion Solutions.

By Anders Grönwall. (Pp. 156; 28 figures. 20s.)
Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications; New
York: Academic Press. 1957.

This little book, by the leader of the team which introduced dextran into clinical practice, is an essential volume for the bookshelf of everybody who is

concerned with the theory or practice of blood transfusion. The whole history of dextran is summarized in 156 pages and eight chapters supported by 446 references. Starting with a general discussion of the problem of colloidal infusion solutions, the reader is led through the mysteries of the production and chemistry of undegraded and degraded dextrans and the methods by which the dextran molecule can be adapted to produce desired therapeutic effects: this is written clearly and in such a way that the reader is never allowed to forget that all this work is devoted to producing a safe and efficient therapeutic agent. Then a discussion on the fate of dextran in the body leads on naturally to a discussion on its serology, while the last 56 pages deal with clinical investigation.

This is quite obviously a book written by one man, and bears the mark of his personality and philosophy. Fortunately this makes it extremely agreeable to read: he is not afraid to lead on by easy stages into complex problems of biosynthesis, of light-scattering and viscosity in relation to molecular size and shape; and no more is he ashamed to utter, once more, the most elementary truths, provided he believes that they are needed: the result is that he has made a book which is an essential work of reference for the transfusionist.

I believe that many students and registrars could profit from it, not as a text on dextran, but as an exposition of the complex problems of modern pharmaceuticals, wherein the practitioner, biologist, chemist, atomic physicist, and others unite in a single aim: its subtitle could be "The Integration of Experiments."

This book has been translated from the Swedish by Rudolph C. Ellsworth, M.S.; he is to be congratulated on a remarkable achievement, for I can find no internal evidence that the book has been translated.

GEORGE DISCOMBE.