BOOK REVIEWS

The Haemolytic Anaemias : Congenital and Acquired.

By J. V. Dacie. (Pp. x+525. 98 figures. 50s.)
London : J. & A. Churchill. 1954.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome a new book which will serve to clarify in the minds of pathologists the many difficult problems which have become so pressing in the last few years. The author's contributions to the subject are well known and are obvious by the many references to the work of his colleagues at the Postgraduate Medical School at Hammersmith and himself.

The haemolytic diseases as exemplified by haemolytic disease of the newborn have been extensively described in the literature, but for reports on other haemolytic processes there has been until now no comprehensive work which could be used as a reference on the subject. The author has presented the main features of the haemolytic anaemias, dividing the congenital abnormality of the erythron from the acquired antibody type of the disease, and he then brings into line those diseases in which the abnormal haemoglobins are the most probable factors in the haemolytic process. In each portion there are case histories which are clear and include a report on the full laboratory investigations, and these are most helpful in focusing the clinical picture of the particular disease. The technical sections are of course excellent, as one would expect from the author of a previous technical book on haematology.

One minor criticism, however, should be noted, and it is hoped that this may be remedied in future editions. It is very trying, even for an experienced haematologist, to see, in a book in which the sizes and shapes of red cells are so carefully discussed and where these features are of such importance, variations in the magnifications of the photomicrographs from $\times 400$ to $\times 1,000$, sometimes on the same page. When the photomicrograph is to demonstrate such things as Pappenheimer bodies this is immaterial, but when it is meant to demonstrate the differences between small spherocytes and large polychromatic reticulocytes it is essential to maintain the same magnification throughout, or else this gives the impression of microcytosis or macrocytosis when it is not intended.

This book is worthy of its place in every pathological laboratory, where it will certainly be frequently consulted, both for its contents and its bibliography.

A. GORDON SIGNY.

Clinical Pathology in General Practice. (Pp. ix+321 ; illustrated. 21s.) London : British Medical Association. 1955.

In this book appear specially commissioned articles on clinical pathology published in the *British Medical Journal* between October, 1953, and July, 1954. As usual with multiple authorship there is no uniformity in the presentation of the articles, nor in their scien-

tific standards. Some of the articles are very clinical and very applied, whereas others describe techniques and methods which are not even used in general hospital laboratories. In fact the general criticism of this book is that it is in no way descriptive of clinical pathology in "general practice," because the editors had clearly not decided in the first instance whether this is a book to bring the general practitioner up to date in the present practice of general pathology, or whether it is intended to describe methods which could be used by the general practitioner. For example, a whole chapter is devoted to necropsy technique, describing simple routine technical details of doing a necropsy which might be considered adequate for the general practitioner, but on the other hand there are details of methods to be used in exhumation, where clearly a specialist would be brought in. On page 113 there is described the spectrographic appearance of pigments in faeces, and on page 260 there is a description of Geiger counters in radioactive iodine tests for thyroid function. This is not in keeping with Professor Bedson's introductory statement on the facilities provided by the National Health Service for general practitioners. It would be preferable to adopt the style of Dr. Mourant on blood grouping, where he describes the *principles* but not the *practice* of blood grouping. There are throughout the book many useful hints to practitioners on the availability of the various tests, their interpretation, and their value.

On the whole the book is easy to read, and if the above criticisms could be met it would become a splendid guide to the general practitioner. It is certainly excellent value at 21s.

A. GORDON SIGNY.

The Pathogenesis of Poliomyelitis. By Harold K. Faber. (Pp. xvi+157 ; 16 figures. 36s.) Oxford : Blackwell Scientific Publications. Springfield, Illinois : Charles C. Thomas. 1955.

From many aspects poliomyelitis has been one of the most controversial medical subjects of the past 50 years, particularly with regard to its pathogenesis in man. This has, of course, been linked with differences of opinion concerning the mode of spread and site of entry of the virus into the host. Much has been inferred from the results of experiments in Indian (rhesus) and South East Asian (cynomolgus) monkeys, and a relatively small number of African monkeys and chimpanzees, and this has at times led to considerable confusion because of the presumption that the results represented what occurred in natural infection in man. Even a single strain of virus may behave differently in each of the three species of monkey and chimpanzee, depending on the route of inoculation. In the main, opinion has been divided between those who support a hypothesis that the virus is entirely neurogenic in its affinities, and