attempted to bring it up to date by the addition of many footnotes. Whether the completed work is too long must be a matter of opinion, but there is no doubt it is very expensive.

In the present reviewer's opinion the text could have been shortened in many places with advantage and expanded in others. For instance, there are many extensive (and expensive) tables of blood counts and other data in the chapters (by Dr. E. Stransky) on the blood picture in infancy and childhood, and Dr. Baar's own account of the discrepancies in the calculation of red-cell life-span, based on measurements of reticulocyte ripening times and those based on Ashby or ^{51}Cr survival studies, and his account of the effect of heat on red cells, could have been drastically cut. In their place one would have welcomed more discussion on the practical aspects of the treatment of acute leukaemia as it occurs in childhood, and of the value of fresh blood or platelet transfusions in aplastic anaemia.

The authors of books on blood diseases are faced with some quite difficult decisions. These centre around the scope or breadth of the book; whether, for instance, Hodgkin's disease should be included and if so whether its aetiology should be discussed (Dr. Baar does both); the balance between clinical and pathological interest and the depth of treatment. In writing a book on blood diseases in childhood, there is the additional difficulty of deciding what to leave in and what to omit. Should, for instance, giant follicular lymphadenopathy and multiple myeloma, which are almost unknown in childhood, be included, and what about haemorrhagic thrombocythaemia? Dr. Baar includes all three disorders, the last simply because in one case of thrombocytopenic purpura he had noted a rise in platelet count to over 1 million as a result of treatment with phenylhydrazine.

The reviewer finds it impossible to write about this book with enthusiasm. It contains, however, a great deal of information and extensive bibliographies at the end of each section, and the historical approach to each subject is welcome. But it has to be added that the text contains far more mis-spellings, particularly of authors' names, and other errors than it should.

J. C. DACIE

THE CONTACT PHASE OF BLOOD COAGULATION By H. L. Nossel. (Pp. xv + 160; 37 figures: 32 tables. 35*s*.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1964.

This is a delightful little book. The author has explored the mysteries of the initial or contact phase of blood coagulation in great detail, and introduces the reader to his ideas and the experiments he has used to investigate, what is to haematologists, a puzzling subject.

The reader is first gently introduced to the complexities of the subject, but most of the book is taken up with a description of the many experiments and techniques used by the author.

The subject is at first sight academic but the practical implications of the results obtained becomes apparent as one reads on. A study of this phase of blood coagulation not only relates to the hypocoagulant state but provides information that may be important to research into the problems of thrombosis.

Each chapter requires and merits meticulous study, as the text contains several confusing terms, *e.g.*, Celite 6 exhausted plasma. On reflection, however, it is difficult to see how this use of compound terms could have been avoided. This book should be read by everyone who has an interest in academic and diagnostic problems related to blood coagulation and thrombosis; the expert will find this book refreshing and the tyro should be stimulated to fresh efforts.

ALAN SHARP

BIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF OCCLUSIVE VASCULAR DISEASE Edited by D. G. Chalmers and G. A. Gresham. (Pp. xiv + 420; illustrated. 120*s*.) Cambridge University Press. 1964.

This beautifully produced volume sets out the papers which were presented at a Cambridge postgraduate course in March 1962. The editors have done their work efficiently, clearing away the trivialities from the discussions so that these now provide pithy addenda to the set papers.

A remarkably wide field is covered, extending from the fundamentals of micro-structure, histochemistry, tissue metabolism, and the biophysics of blood flow, through the physio-pathology of coagulation, thrombosis, and fibrinolysis to the anatomy of human, animal, and experimental atherosclerosis. Finally, a section on clinical research ends with a somewhat philosophical discussion of the part the practising clinician can play in advancing the subject.

Amongst this wealth of material histopathologists will perhaps enjoy most the electron microscopy of the intima by French, the histochemical papers by Helen Muir (mucopolysaccharides), Curran (collagen formation), and Adams (lipids and enzymes), while haematologists will appreciate the very full discussion of the reactions of platelets in relation to thrombosis in the papers by Poole, Mitchell, McDonald, Sharp, and Hellem. Perhaps the papers which strike the most original notes are those of Bangham on surface reactions in relation to coagulation, and Scott Blair on the physics of blood flow in small vessels. The papers serve to remind readers that many of the problems of vascular pathology require the collaboration of physicists in their studies.

T. CRAWFORD

STRUCTURE AND METABOLISM OF CORTICOSTEROIDS Edited by Jorge R. Pasqualini and Max F. Jayle. (Pp. x + 168; illustrated.) London and New York: Academic Press. 1964.

This volume represents the papers read at the symposium held in Paris in July 1963. This will be of special interest to research workers active in this field. The book is divided into three sections dealing with intermediate structure, with assay of intermediates and conjugation, and with metabolism of the corticosteroids in disease states. James and Landon describe the effect of dexamethasone on blood cortisol levels. Cost describes what appears to be the new familial salt-losing defect of C-18 block, while Brooks gives data on the cortisol 17KGS ratios differentiating Cushing's syndrome from 'normal'