

north is clearly shown. ABO groups vary markedly throughout Britain and apart from the expected changes just mentioned there are a number of areas in which there are sharp variations which cannot be accidental and which require further explanation. The Rhesus data show that if regional variation does occur it must be small but it does seem that the D-negative frequency among the Welsh and Irish is lower than elsewhere.

Blood donors might be selected for their ABO and Rh groups and it could be argued that any conclusions reached in a study such as this could not be accurate for the population as a whole. The author has taken steps to overcome this possible source of error and had compared her results for blood donors with those available for RAF recruits, people who would have been selected in a totally different manner. Having divided the RAF personnel according to their home addresses Dr Kopeć compared their blood groups with those of donors living in the same areas and obtained, for the most part, a very good correlation between the two series.

Despite her wide knowledge of genetics and anthropology, Dr Kopeć, as a statistician, has based her analysis on a statistical approach. She has provided the facts and left it to the reader, be he a geneticist, anthropologist, historian, demographer, or sociologist, to interpret them as he will. This book is therefore a research tool to be used by investigators in a wide range of ways. Dr Kopeć is to be congratulated on accomplishing a task of such magnitude while both publishers and printers deserve great credit for their part in producing such a handsome volume.

K. L. G. GOLDSMITH

Laboratory Guide to Disordered Haemostasis By T. A. Harper. (Pp. 200; illustrated. £2.10) London: Butterworths and Co. Ltd. 1970.

Following his monograph on the peripheral blood film, Dr Harper has now turned to the difficult field of haemostasis. Although readable and well produced, the book is oversimplified and has too many misleading statements, errors and omissions, eg, the therapeutic range with the one-stage prothrombin test is stated to be 2-2.25%; factors VII, IX, and X are independently listed as being reduced instead of increased in pregnancy; undue

reliance is placed on the partial thromboplastin time in the diagnosis of mild haemophilia. The test is stated to detect factor VIII levels below 50% whereas recent views are that the unmodified test is only sensitive to depression of factor VIII to 20% of the normal population average; Dr Harper is wrongly under the impression that a comparison of prothrombin results at different laboratories can be made by comparing the shape of the saline dilution curves; the modified Lee and White clotting time described in the text is incorrectly referred to as the original technique dating from 1913.

Most of the book consists of laboratory methods. These are taken from widely available sources with little guidance or attempt to assess their relative reliability and value. Some antiquated procedures, eg, the capillary and lead-shot clotting times, which have been discarded, appear alongside new unassessed techniques. In this section criticism can also be made of the use of anhydrous calcium chloride and 3.8% sodium citrate; omission of the need for a strict low-temperature technique in fibrinolytic tests; the recommendation to dilute serially in saline dilution curves which is inaccurate and cannot avoid contact activation. The statement that plasma obtained from a patient 24 hours after coumarin therapy is used for a factor VII assay substrate needs much more qualification. The scheme of investigation of haemostatic failure is hopelessly impractical and illogical, and it would be dangerous to rely on the summary of findings table presented in the appendix. Omissions include developments in coagulation knowledge since Macfarlane's cascade, enzyme kinetics, PIVKA, etc.

L. POLLER

Clinical Investigations by Means of Haematology By F. A. Ward. (Pp. vii + 164. £1.40) London: Butterworths and Co. Ltd. 1970.

In his preface the author states that 'nothing original is claimed of this book except the presentation of subject matter. It is essentially a case book. The cases are chosen with the object of illustrating and stressing certain points in clinical medicine. After a short clinical history and a minimum of laboratory data the reader is challenged with a number of questions. Here is his opportunity to show his erudi-

tion and mental ingenuity. The questions are then discussed on the following page. Because of the author's modest goal it can be said that he has attained it. In 73 case reports a wide range of diagnostic problems has been covered and the reader gets an introduction, albeit superficial, into clinical haematology. Dr Ward has perhaps taken his brief of using only simple laboratory investigations rather too rigidly; in even the simplest laboratory today it should be possible to have a relatively reliable platelet count and reticulocyte count included in a routine investigation of a patient with a blood dyscrasia.

The author works in Durban, South Africa, and it is intriguing to have clinical histories which include details of patients visiting witchdoctors or being given herbal medicines. This does not detract from the value of the book in less exotic medical environments and it can be recommended as a very simple introduction to clinical haematology for those taking their first steps in this subject. Factually there is little to fault but more alert proof reading would have corrected a relatively large number of typographical errors.

S. M. LEWIS

General Pathology 3rd ed. By J. B. Walter and M. S. Israel. (Pp. x + 1,116; illustrated. £7.50) London: J. and A. Churchill. 1970.

The third edition of this textbook aims, like its predecessors, to provide an account of the fundamental processes of pathology. It transcends the traditional boundaries between the main branches of pathology and indeed trespasses freely into the fields of physiology and clinical medicine. All this is excellent and serves to provide the student, be he under- or postgraduate, with an excellent basis for his subsequent study of special pathology. Revision from the previous edition has been thorough and especially the rewriting of the sections on immunology, blood transfusion, amyloid, and the plasma proteins. The authors are to be congratulated on achieving this with the addition of a mere 70 pages to the text. This now constitutes one of the main British textbooks of general pathology and can be thoroughly recommended to young trainees both in pathology and in other specialties.

T. CRAWFORD