It is most encouraging to the editors of this journal to see such an extensive use made of the material published in it during the past two years, with references to many of the recent papers published here. The references throughout are very adequate, and yet they never intrude upon the reader. Some of the new plates are excellent, especially those of the bone marrow where reference to the key identifying the individual cell is immediately accessible. Other new plates are, however, not of the standard which we expect in this textbook. The new colour plates 6, 9, and 11 (i) show entirely different colour from the older plates, and are not an accurate representation of the normally used staining methods. Comparing plate 5 (p. 45) with its counterpart, plate 3, in the previous edition, neither colour nor details, particularly of the reticulocyte, compare favourably with the earlier illustrations. (It is possible that this occurred only in the reviewer's copy.) It is also rather disturbing to find evidence of uncertain sub-editing in the use of those abbreviations which have become standard in scientific literature. It is to be hoped that reprints or any new editions will remove the indiscriminate use of the abbreviations "g," "gm," "mg," and "mgm." This is particularly striking in some pages—e.g., on page 138 where line two refers to "3.34 mg. of iron," and, thereafter, in consecutive lines refers to "26 mgm. of iron." Similarly page 635 refers to "0.5 gram" and "0.15 gram," and a little further down uses "25 g. of Na_2HPO_4 ," whereas two pages later, in the method for peroxidase staining, we are told to "rub 0.2 gm. of benzidine." These minor irritations could be removed by a little careful sub-editing.

Only one criticism remains, which it is hoped the authors will face in their next edition, and that is the vexed question of the colour index. It seems a pity to perpetuate this measurement in the light of many of the remarks made in this and other publications, which leads to the conflicting use of the term "hyperchromic anaemia" in the classification of the anaemias and in the discussion. The nomenclature is later attacked on page 58, where the term "hyperchromic" is called "misleading." As the index is based on two percentage figures, neither of which is in any way relevant, the index itself must frequently be misleading and has outlived its usefulness. There is really no more point in referring to the percentage of haemoglobin than to the percentage of urea in the blood, or the percentage of blood pressure over a stated average normal. There is no doubt

that students and clinicians must be trained in the use of the new terminology, and be taught to think in terms of haemoglobin in g.%, but as long as the old method of reporting is perpetuated in Whitby and Britton, there can be no universal change-over.

It is impossible to consider in any greater detail the rest of the book. It is sufficient to say that the authors have used their judgment well in maintaining the old, and introducing new, subject matter, and that this book, already the standard "blood book" in this and many other countries, has worthily consolidated its position with this new edition.

A. GORDON SIGNY.

Practical Haematology. By J. V. Dacie, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.P.(Lond.). Pp. 172. Illustrated. London. J. and A. Churchill, Ltd. Price 10s. 6d.

We should like to welcome this new handbook of practical haematology, which is a product of the Department of Clinical Pathology at the British Post-Graduate Medical School in London.

It is based on practical notes for students and is an admirable laboratory book for pathologists and technicians in training.

The author makes no attempt to set down elaborate techniques, nor does he duplicate the methods, as this is essentially a practical handbook of standard methods used in a routine laboratory. The approach to the subject is logical and direct, and it is encouraging to see such a positive view taken of the value and limitation of laboratory investigations, as it is particularly the beginners in laboratory work who tend to place so much reliance on results which have an intrinsic error. This excellence is well illustrated in, for example, the short section on the red cell count (p. 36) which could with advantage be distributed from every laboratory to clinicians who tend to rely on small variations in the red cell count as a guide to progress and prognosis. Throughout the book all the methods described have been thoroughly tested, and the book will no doubt be widely used by students entering for the haematology examination of the Institute of Laboratory Technology.

The author has resisted any temptation to become too theoretical but the reason for each

step in any technique is carefully explained. The book will without doubt become a standard manual, but it will probably have to grow in size, as it becomes necessary to provide alternative methods for the more enquiring and this will undoubtedly enhance its value.

A. GORDON SIGNY.

Jordan-Burrows Textbook of Bacteriology.

By W. Burrows with the collaboration of F. B. Gordon, R. J. Porter, and J. W. Moulder. 15th Ed. Philadelphia and London. W. B. Saunders. Pp. 981. Price 45s.

"Jordan and Burrows," now in its fifteenth edition with Professor W. Burrows as editor and principal author, has long been a popular textbook of bacteriology in America. Designed originally as a textbook for the undergraduate student, this present volume deals with some aspects of general bacteriology in greater

detail than is required to meet the needs of our medical students. The chapter on bacterial physiology, for example, runs to 75 pages. But it should be added that the introductory chapters on bacterial variation, virulence, transmission of infection, and immunity are very readable and remarkably up to date. The chapters on individual pathogens are essentially practical; the infections with which they are associated are briefly described, the methods for laboratory diagnosis are given, and the epidemiology and control of the infection are adequately discussed. There are comprehensive chapters on medical mycology and parasitology, and Dr. F. B. Gordon contributes three chapters on filterable viruses, the virus infections of man, and bacteriophage.

Pleasant features in an American textbook are the frequent references to British work and a rather conservative attitude to new bacterial terminology. The book is beautifully produced and the illustrations and microphotographs are excellent.

ROBERT CRUICKSHANK.

ERRATA

Dr. Prunty writes: "My attention has been drawn to an error on page 104 (May, 1950). At the bottom of the section on eosinophil counts appear the words 'total count multiplied by 0.625.' This should read 'total count multiplied by $\frac{100}{64}$.'"

Dr. B. A. Thompson writes: "Further to my paper 'Dried Disc Technique for Determining Sensitivity to the Antibiotics' published in the May issue, I regret to say that I was misinformed on the name of the filter paper I used. The paper used was Postlip Mills No. 633 filter paper or Green's No. 401 filter paper."