BOOK REVIEWS

Traitement des Hémorragies. By Jean-Pierre Soulier. (Pp. 217. Fr. Frs. 1,400.) Paris: Les Editions Médicales Flammarion. 1953.

In the first section of this book, after a brief reference to the methods of investigating haemostatic function, the author deals soundly and critically with the various drugs and other preparations for which a haemostatic action has been claimed, beginning with adrenalin and ending with the transfusion of concentrated platelet suspensions.

The second part of the book is concerned with the treatment of the haemorrhagic syndromes one by one. Here Dr. Soulier's recommendations are generally in line with current British practice. For example, in a discussion on the treatment of haemorrhage in haemophilia the need for large and repeated transfusions is stressed; 300 to 500 ml. of fresh blood or plasma are regarded as the minimum volumes likely to result in any appreciable benefit in the adult. Transfusions given at intervals in order to forestall haemorrhage are not recommended because of their transient effect and because of the possible danger of the formation of circulating anticoagulants. Splenectomy is recommended for all patients with idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura whose disease has lasted more than one year and who suffer from frequent haemorrhages.

The third part of the book deals with the treatment of haemorrhage from various sites and organs. This section, which necessarily deals with such subjects as the treatment of uterine fibroids and a discussion on surgical intervention for gastric haemorrhage, will be of less interest to the haematologist.

In all, there are 193 pages of text, and of the 98 references in the bibliography it is noteworthy that more than half of them have been taken from British or American sources.

J. V. DACIE.

Disorders of the Blood. By Sir Lionel Whitby and C. J. C. Britton, 7th edition. (Pp. xii+856, 20 plates, 106 figures. 63s.) London: J. & A. Churchill. 1953.

As the authors point out in the preface to the new edition of this standard English textbook, the task of maintaining a textbook on a rapidly growing subject is difficult, but the authors have managed to put into this new edition several chapters which indicate to the general reader the advancing line of haematology in all its aspects. This is particularly noticeable in the new chapters on immuno-haematology and blood coagulation. The new British work on coagulation is here given prominence, and the very adequate details of the new tests and their evaluation should give to the practising pathologist a clearer understanding of pseudo-haemophilia, Christmas disease, and other coagulation defects. It is rewarding to read the clear descriptions of

such subjects as the transport of iron, haemoglobin synthesis, the place of B_{12} in haemopoiesis as well as in treatment, and a clarification of the haemolytic anaemias by the use of the variety of tests for haemolysins and the survival times of transfused red cells. On the subject of immunology the authors take a classic stand, and an excellent chapter on the prevention and treatment of transfusion reactions is particularly noteworthy.

The book ends, as previously, with a section on practical methods, and here again the previous standard is maintained with brevity and clarity of technical descriptions which are easy to follow in every case. It is certainly gratifying to see this standard textbook maintaining and even improving upon its previous high standard and brought well up to date with mention in the text and in the references of the most recent accepted advances in haematology. Unfortunately the increase in the size of the subject and therefore of the book from 759 to 856 pages has also meant an increase in price.

A. GORDON SIGNY.

The Megaloblastic Anaemias. By L. J. Davis and A. Brown. (Pp. xi+113; 12 figures. 21s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1953.

This eminently readable small monograph has been written for the general physician rather than for practising haematologists. Even so it is noteworthy for an admirable presentation of a difficult subject still full of controversy, with a style which makes the clinical and pathological aspects readily understood. The management of patients with megaloblastic anaemias is outlined in some detail and the importance is stressed of the laboratory investigations before treatment is started and adequate laboratory control in the follow-up. The seven photomicrographs show a uniform excellence and demonstrate normal and abnormal erythropoiesis. Two hundred and seventy-eight references are included, but it must be said that the price appears excessive for a monograph of this size.

A. GORDON SIGNY.

Nature and Structure of Collagen. Edited by J. T. Randall, assisted by Sylvia Fitton Jackson. (Pp. 269; illustrated. 42s.) London: Butterworths Scientific Publications. 1953.

A discussion was convened by the Colloid and Biophysics Committee of the Faraday Society at King's College, London, in March, 1953. Twenty-four papers were presented. These have now been published, together with verbatim reports of the discussions which they aroused.

Owing to the participation of experts from almost every branch of science concerned with fibre structure and fibrogenesis, the volume presents a remarkably comprehensive yet compact account of the present state of knowledge in this extremely important field. Subjects