

# Reviews of Recent Books

**Nutrition and Physical Fitness** (sixth edition) by L. Jean Bogert, Ph.D. W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, 1954. pp. 664, \$4.50.

The fact that this volume is now in its sixth revision since it first appeared in 1931 attests its value. Careful perusal confirms and amplifies this conclusion. It is a comprehensive text presenting the essentials of nutrition accurately, clearly, and concisely. It can be studied with profit by all those concerned with nutrition (and what adult isn't concerned, at least with his or her own nutrition?), nurses, college students, dieticians, graduate students, mothers, and physicians. Without exhausting the reader, the established knowledge concerning nutrition is made palatable and understandable.

In the preface to the first edition Dr. Bogert states that the purpose of the book is threefold: (1) To gather in a single volume facts useful in meeting everyday problems of nutrition; (2) To make this information widely available by presenting it in simple language to those with no prior knowledge of chemistry; and (3) To emphasize wherever possible where and how a knowledge of nutrition contributes to health. These three objectives are fully attained. The book may be used as a text in teaching and is equally valuable as a reference volume of basic information, for it is adequately indexed.

The contents, 29 chapters and an appendix of tables delineating the nutritive value of foods, is divided into four parts: I, Body Needs; II, Body Processes; III, Meal Planning; and IV, Diet for Special Conditions. In addition to specific reference footnotes documenting many statements, a fairly comprehensive and well-selected list of articles and/or books for supplemental reading ends each chapter.

Typography is clear; the illustrations are appropriate and informative. For professionals the chemistry is unnecessarily elementary, but the reason for this, as stated in the text's preface, appears valid. This is a storehouse of essential information, so organized that it is readily accessible to the novice, advanced student, nurse, or busy medical practitioner.

EDWARD J. STIEGLITZ

**Energy Metabolism and Nutrition** by R. W. Swift and C. E. French, The Scarecrow Press, Washington, D. C., 1954. pp. 260. \$5.75.

The authors of this book are from the Department of Animal Nutrition of the Pennsylvania State University. They have prepared a useful survey of the principles and methods of study of energy metabo-

lism and present their material from the standpoint of the teacher of senior and graduate students.

The first part deals with principles of calorimetry, and there is a discussion of the respiratory quotient, body temperature regulation, and so on.

The second part deals with the methods used in direct and indirect calorimetry and in the study of energy metabolism made from the determination of digestibility, dynamic effect, and net energy.

The third part deals with methods of food experimentation in which the length of experimental periods, the evaluation of the procedure, basal metabolism, obesity, work efficiency, and efficiency of utilization are briefly discussed.

While there is nothing very new in the book, it is of definite value for those whose work involves these problems, since it has within its covers most of the essential information needed for workers in the field. In the reviewer's opinion, it does achieve its goal of offering a useful guide to relatively inexperienced students of biochemistry and physiology who are interested in energy metabolism and who want to understand the principles of theory and practice in this field.

A.E.S.

**Vitamins and Hormones, Vol. XI**, Academic Press Inc., New York, 1953, pp. 356, \$8.50.

These annual compilations of monographs have come to be one of the best sources of summarized information available in clinical and laboratory investigation. The 1953 volume is no exception. Among the eight chapters, our readers will find of particular interest that by Nicholaysen and Eeg-Larsen of Oslo on vitamin D, A. P. Meiklejohn on ascorbic acid, Ralli and Dunn on pantothenic acid, and Zubiran and Gomez-Mont on "Endocrine Disturbances in Chronic Human Malnutrition."

The latter paper is a stimulating survey of disturbances of the endocrine system found in 529 adults suffering from chronic malnutrition. Autopsy material revealed involution and atrophic changes in the endocrine glands; and a large number of hormonal determination and endocrine function tests showed diminished activity in most instances. With improvement of nutritional status, normal function was re-established in most cases. It appears that lower pituitary activity is the fundamental cause of the disturbances of the other endocrines.

The liver had been considered to have a cardinal role in hyperestrogenism in malnutrition. However, in this study, no such phenomenon was present in

nearly 100 per cent of the women or in 79 per cent of the men suffering from severe malnutrition. In fact, in nearly every instance an increase in estrogen activity was observed during the recovery period.

Other articles deal with the synthesis of cortisone, the cytological localization of ketosteroids, and the biochemistry of the thyroid gland.

This book, with its useful author and subject index, can be highly recommended. S.O.W.

**Newer Concepts of the Causes and Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus.** The National Vitamin Foundation Inc., New York, 1954, pp. 177, \$2.50.

This is a report of the proceedings of the symposium on diabetes sponsored by the New York Diabetes Association in October 1953. The arrangement is such that the first portion of the proceedings deals with the fundamental biochemical advances and recent experimental data in diabetes; the final sections are devoted to clinical applications of this newer knowledge. Among the contributors to the first part are some of the outstanding investigators in this field: Mayer discusses the Hereditary Obese-hyperglycemic Syndrome in the Mouse; Gurin, Lipogenesis in Diabetes; Long, The Endocrines and Carbohydrate Metabolism; Houssay, Hormone Interrelationships; Stadie, The Action of Insulin; and Wrenshall, Glucagon.

In the second part of the book, the clinical aspects of diabetes mellitus are given broad coverage without emphasis on detail but with attention to general concepts adopted by the individual authors. The reader may take exception to some of these presentations based upon his own experience and practice in this field. The recommendation by Pollack that patients be permitted to use free sugar represents a departure from the usual practice. The discussion of Pregnancy and Diabetes by Hurwitz reviews his experience in the management of 140 such patients, emphasizing the need for careful and meticulous supervision by the internist and obstetrician. Following this and other chapters there are included the discussions presented by those attending the symposium, which adds to the value of this report. The book should be read by all physicians interested in this disease and its treatment. C. R. SHUMAN

**Wine as Food and Medicine** by S. P. Lucia, Blakiston, New York, 1954, pp. 119, \$3.00.

This book is almost a polemic on the virtues of wine. It is a compendium of old and new (mostly old) claims of the nutritive and curative powers of fermented grape juice.

Although the author states there is a "demand for an evaluation of wine as a medicinal agent, and for the separation of fact from folklore," we also read in the next paragraph that "partaking of wine offers an opportunity for psychic rest and release from the pressures of the day; it also provides time for recov-

ery from mental fatigue so that the psyche may be better able to cope with our frenetic mode of living." This sentence shows the viewpoint and style of the book. The single slant is also clearly demonstrated in the following. "This book is offered as a *vade mecum* to those who are unprejudiced in their search for that which makes men desire to live against odds often unsurmountable."

This reviewer enjoys Claret and Chablis as much as anyone, but he does not feel relieved that all will be well by reading a 1929 reference that "under normal conditions, wine included discreetly in the diet does not produce hepatic lesions." Neither is he convinced that minor hepatic insufficiency responds "not unfavorably to unadulterated dry white table wine" (page 58). He remains unmoved by a sentence from a 1939 reference that "For the laborer who uses his muscles, it [wine, of course] even may be a physiologic necessity!" (exclamation mark and all).

The reviewer is even less happy about the discussion of the use of wine in diabetes. There is a quotation, for example, from a paper written 45 years ago that wine does not increase glycosuria. The uncritical inclusion of statements on the virtues of wine can be illustrated (page 96) by four old references purporting that significant decreases in blood sugar levels occurred in diabetics after "small amounts" of alcohol.

Throughout the book are such statements as: a glass of wine taken at bedtime will often forestall a cold by acting as a sudorific—or, in endogenous obesity, white wine is preferred because of its diuretic properties and stimulating effect on neuromuscular tone.

There is a clear need for a critical analysis of the huge volume of claims and "observations" about wine as a food or drug. That particular goal is not achieved by this paean of praise of the virtues of the elixir of the grape. A.E.S.

**Annual Review of Medicine, Vol. 5,** edited by W. C.

Cutting and H. W. Newman, Annual Reviews, Inc., Stanford, 1954, pp. 490, \$7.00.

The current edition of these "Annual Reviews" maintains their distinctive characteristics: summaries of current developments in various fields of medicine documented by hundreds of bibliographical references. For example, Soffer and Gabrilove's review of endocrinology, excluding the gonads, documents 433 articles. Although many papers are summarized, at times in but one sentence, the overall picture of today's research is quite clear.

There are chapters on radioactivity, toxicology, dentistry, and psychiatry, as well as on the usual subjects, such as cardiology, infectious diseases, etc. All are written by experts in their respective fields.

Again, this review will be of particular benefit as a helpful reference volume and will be especially useful to those in investigative work. S.O.W.

