

Reviews of Recent Books



Diabète sucré, Diabète insipide, Régulation électrolytique. Rapports de la IV^e réunion des endocrinologistes de langue française, ed. by Prof. A. Souleirac. *Annales d'Endocrinologie*, G. Doin et Cie, Editeurs, 1957, and Masson & Cie Editeurs, Paris, pp. 420, 3,800 Francs.

Many branches of scientific research came to a stop in Western Europe in 1939. After the end of the war, for many years, the shortage of financial resources, equipment, and buildings was such that research started again only very slowly. An indirect but unfortunate result was that a new generation of scientists, particularly in rapidly growing sciences such as endocrinology, grew up in this country with no inclination and little capacity for reading the foreign literature. While no self-respecting scientist actually dared express this view aloud in an academic environment, many behaved as though to say that if an article were not in English, it could not be worth reading.

Such prejudices among endocrinologists should be dispelled by the perusal of any recent issues of the *Annales d'Endocrinologie*. They could be shattered equally well by the impressive volume on "Sugar Diabetes, Diabetes Insipidus and Electrolyte Regulation" which embodies lectures given at the 4th Congress of French-speaking Endocrinologists. The symposium comprised three main sessions. Accordingly, the first part of the book is on the role of the adrenal cortex in the regulation of mineral metabolism and comprises three chapters: biochemistry of aldosterone (M. F. Jayle and E. E. Baulieu, Faculty of Medicine, Paris); physiology of aldosterone and clinical observations (A. F. Muller and R. S. Mach, University Clinic, Geneva); physiologic effects of mineralocorticoids (F. Morel, Nuclear Studies Center, Saclay). The second part deals with neurosecretory process and diabetes insipidus. More specifically, it has chapters on recent clinical contributions to the problem of diabetes insipidus (P. A. Bastenie, R. Bellens, V. Conard, and J. C. Demanet, Saint Pierre Hospital, Brussels), on histophysiology of neurosecretory processes (R. Collin and J. Barry, Faculty of Medicine, Nancy), on the biochemistry and biology of neuro-pituitary hormones (F. Stutinsky). The last part, on the endocrine pancreas and diabetes, was of even greater interest to this reviewer (probably because of his own attention to this subject). The first two chapters, Histopathology of the Islets of Langerhans and Pathogenic Concepts on Diabetes, by L. Desclin and W. Gepts (University Hospital, Brussels) and Histo-

physiology of the Endocrine Pancreas of Mammals by J. Verne (Faculty of Medicine, Paris), which are supplemented by superb color illustrations, constitute one of the best summaries available on the histology of the pancreas. The next two chapters, on Hypoglycemic Sulfamides, are written by two men from the laboratory where their action was first described. L. Hedon (Faculty of Medicine, Montpellier) retraces the first findings and their implications; A. Loubatieres (*ibid.*) discusses the more recent findings and analyzes possible modes of action. C. de Duve and J. Berthet (University of Louvain) have, in their chapter on Glucagon, given what is by far the most thorough and the most imaginative review on this fascinating "new" hormone. In the last chapter, J. P. Hoet, R. de Meyer, and P. D. Ricci (*ibid.*) give a concise but stimulating review of hormonal regulations of the activity of the endocrine pancreas.

It should be superfluous to say that this book (which is remarkably well edited by Prof. Souleirac and superbly printed) should be read by all persons active in the field of endocrinology. It is perhaps not unnecessary to add that some of the compilation of facts and presentation of ideas printed here (to give but one example, the discussion on the possible roles of glucagon) are simply not available in this form anywhere else.

JEAN MAYER

Aids to Materia Medica and Therapeutics, 4th edition, by J. W. Hadgraft. Bailliere, Tindall and Cox, London (Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore), 1957, pp. 259, \$3.25.

The first edition of this little student aid-book appeared 25 years ago. The continued popularity indicates it successfully fills a widespread need. As a pocket reference to established drugs, it presents essential information in an extremely condensed form. Because it is written for the British medical student the terminology of the British Pharmacopoeia is used; nevertheless, it can be equally useful to American readers. It is somewhat puzzling that some products have trade names along with the generic names and others do not. When trade names are given only one or two are listed, which tends to lend unwarranted recommendation to one or the other manufacturer. As a quick reference handbook in which the dose and action are summarized in a few sentences the book serves its purpose well. It is a cousin to a dictionary but no relative to a pharmaceutical textbook. S. O. W.

The Story of Peptic Ulcer. Richard D. Tonkin, M.D., F.R.C.P. W. B. Saunders, Philadelphia, 1957, pp. 71, \$2.25.

This is a charming and witty little volume, imaginatively and humorously illustrated by Raymond Keith Hellier, intended to inform and reassure patients with a peptic ulcer.

No one who has been entertained by reading it can pick a serious quarrel with this book or with its admonitions to the ulcer patient to take small, frequent feedings and to cultivate a tranquil state of mind. Since Dr. Tonkin evidently designed it to save himself time explaining the nature of peptic ulcer to his patients, it was probably designed to fill a specific need. However, this reviewer believes that it comes a little short of the mark in telling the ulcer patient what he should know about his disease. For instance, there is no mention made of the use of medication in the treatment program. Although the author creates an atmosphere of confidence and encourages squarely facing the realities of the problem, he does not mention the complications or surgical treatment of peptic ulcer. On the other hand, his treatment of information on the incidence and etiology of peptic ulcer seems a bit confusing and possibly not of intrinsic interest to the ulcer patient. However, the book justifies its own existence by being enjoyable reading for doctor and patient alike.

J. B. HAMMOND

A History of Nutrition, by E. V. McCollum, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1957, pp. 451, \$6.00.

There has long been a need for a good history of nutrition. Now a distinguished investigator has undertaken this difficult task. It is to Professor McCollum's credit that he has done an admirable and in many ways unique job.

The subtitle, "The sequence of ideas of nutrition investigations," explains this unusual book. Each chapter concentrates on one aspect of nutrition and carries it from early times to the early 1940's. Vitamins and minerals are covered more thoroughly than are protein, fat, and carbohydrate. Studies on caloric needs are rather lightly passed over. Some of the newest developments (e.g., vitamin B₁₂) are not covered and in view of the rapidly changing picture this may well be left for future historians.

Throughout, the emphasis is on animal experimentation, reflecting the author's own interests. Particularly valuable are the numerous references to pioneering studies hitherto buried in the great mass of "literature." The author and subject indexes are quite helpful. Present and future students of nutrition will find much of value in this well written book. All who

work in this field will owe a debt of gratitude to the author for his painstaking labors and even the casual reader will appreciate the tremendous amount of work that has gone into the development of our present day knowledge of nutrition and metabolism. S. O. W.

Dangerous Properties of Industrial Materials, by N. Irving Sax. Reinhold, New York, 1957, pp. 1,221, \$22.50.

The forerunner of this book has been the bible for reference in our industrial, medical safety, and industrial hygiene departments for several years. This new edition is more complete and better organized in the sense that there is easy reference to the multiplicity of agents and compounds now prevalent in a chemical industry. The subject matter is deftly handled in that instructions and materials are comprehensively covered in an understandable manner.

Whereas the new edition adds bulk to an already large volume, the new material is particularly apropos and concise. This volume admirably fulfills its purpose, that of a complete, quick reference, for prompt and proper understanding of a diversified number of chemical products.

The brief but complete medical explanation section is particularly welcome. The book will be useful for the industrial physician, the hygienist, and the safety engineer.

J. D. PIERCE

Books received for review by THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF CLINICAL NUTRITION are acknowledged in this column. As far as practicable those of special interest are selected, as space permits, for a more extensive review.

The Relation of Psychiatry to Pharmacology by Abraham Wikler, Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore, 1957, pp. 322, \$4.00.

Practical Clinical Chemistry by Alma Hiller, Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1957, pp. 265, \$6.50.

How to Eat Well and Live Longer by Leon Patrick, Exposition Press, New York, 1958, pp. 121, \$2.75.

Office Gastroenterology by Albert F. R. Andresen, Saunders, Philadelphia, 1958, pp. 707, \$14.00.

Drugs—Their Nature, Action and Use by Harry Beckman, Saunders, Philadelphia, 1958, pp. 728, \$15.00.

Folk Medicine by D. C. Jarvis, Henry Holt, New York, 1958, pp. 182, \$2.95.

Diabetes as a Way of Life by T. S. Danowski, Coward-McCann, New York, 1958, pp. 177, \$3.50.

Heart Disease—Cause, Prevention, and Recovery by Philip S. Chen, The Chemical Elements, South Lancaster, Mass., 1958, pp. 189, \$3.00.