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Symposium on Chemistry, Biochemistry and Metabolism of Lipids*

THE day of meetings is with us. Small conferences become large meetings. Large meetings become colossal productions, some of them with considerable in the way of Hollywood trimmings.

In the belief that the time for a reverse swing of the pendulum was more than due, several years ago a small group of men, including the late Harry Deuel, Wendell Griffith, Sidney Madden, and the undersigned decided that it would be well to institute a Pacific Coast Metabolic Conference which would have only one adamant rule, namely, that it would never be permitted to become large.

The 1957 and 1958 Conferences have been devoted to the subject of lipids. Because of the great contributions of Harry Deuel to the understanding of lipid biochemistry and metabolism, in 1958 it was decided to name this conference and future conferences "The Deuel Conferences on Lipids."

Because of the large amount of material included in the presentations and in the discussion, only a portion of the Conference Proceedings is included in this issue of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF CLINICAL NUTRITION. It is probable that discussion will be included in the transcript of future conferences.

Perhaps the most important single contribution to the 1958 Conference was that of Dr. James and his colleagues. The gas phase

* Sixth Annual Symposium, Institute for Metabolic Research, February 24-28, 1958, Oakland, California.

chromatograph devised by James and Martin promises to clarify great areas which until the present time have been shrouded in ignorance. There is reason to believe that the use of this instrument plus the chromatographic column for separation of the lipid fractions of plasma and tissues will aid materially in the understanding of lipid metabolism in general and in the solution of the problems of atherogenesis in particular.

To those responsible for the arrangements, for this, the first of the Deuel Conferences, it seems most probable that the 20 years ahead will be most fruitful years in the field of clinical nutrition. It is for that reason that they, together with the Editors, decided to publish this Symposium in THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF CLINICAL NUTRITION.

Perusal of Dr. Sinclair's poetic masterpiece will make it apparent that whatever the shortcomings of the Symposium, at least it was not stuffy. Dr. Sinclair's contributions to the discussion, particularly in the field of essential fatty acids, were as stimulating as his poetry.

In the papers which follow, more questions are raised than are answered. It seems probable that contributions to these and other lipid conferences in the years immediately ahead will supply many of the answers.

LAURANCE W. KINSELL, M.D.
Director, Institute for Metabolic Research,
Highland Alameda County Hospital,
Oakland, California

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