

BOOK REVIEWS

TEXTBOOK OF ENDOCRINOLOGY. Edited by Robert H. Williams, M.D., Executive Officer and Professor of Medicine, University of Washington Medical School, Seattle. Cloth. \$11.00. Pp. 793. Illustrated. W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia and London, 1950.

The best medical textbooks are usually those which are based upon the personal experience of the authors. In recent years clinical endocrinology has become so broad in scope that a single author can no longer write authoritatively on all its aspects. Consequently, multiple authorship of a textbook of endocrinology by men who have expert knowledge of the various subdivisions of the field has become essential.

This volume on clinical endocrinology illustrates the advantages of multiple authorship. The contributors are men who for the most part are experts on the subjects assigned to them. Robert H. Williams writes on "General Principles of Endocrinology," the "Pituitary," the "Thyroid," and "Laboratory Diagnostic and Assay Procedures;" the late Edwin J. Kepler and William Locke on "Chronic Adrenal Hyperfunction;" George W. Thorn and Peter H. Forsham on "Adrenal Cortical Insufficiency;" John Eager Howard and William Wallace Scott on "The Testes;" George Van S. Smith on "The Ovaries;" George W. Thorn and Peter H. Forsham on "The Pancreas and Diabetes Mellitus;" Edward C. Reifenstein, Jr., on "Diseases of the Parathyroid Glands;" Lawson Wilkins on the "Influence of the Endocrine Glands Upon Growth and Development;" Harry B. Friedgood on "Neuroendocrine and Psychodynamic Aspects of the Endocrinopathies;" and L. H. Newburgh on "Obesity." The assemblage of endocrine material by these authors constitutes a textbook which is authoritative, practical and thorough.

The chapter on diabetes mellitus by Thorn and Forsham is well organized and makes effective use of headings and sub-headings. Fundamental aspects of endocrinology and metabolism in relation to diabetes, as well as purely clinical topics, are taken up in systematic fashion. The authors' style of writing is interesting, readable and usually (but not always) clear. Lack of clarity is apparent in the discussion of the use of insulin for the diabetic patient who must undergo surgery. It is stated that half the daily requirement for insulin may be given preoperatively and half postoperatively, and no more insulin need be given that day. If this advice were applied to a patient with severe diabetes which had been treated with soluble insulin, there would be grave danger of acidosis late on the first postoperative day owing to deprivation of insulin. Undoubtedly the authors intended some restriction on the use of this method of treatment.

Other criticisms of this chapter are largely concerned with details rather than with the over-all presentation of the subject. Thus, the brief paragraph on lipemia retinalis on page 484 fails to mention that this interesting condition occurs chiefly in diabetic acidosis and coma. Likewise, table 36 on page 544 can be interpreted to mean that loss of consciousness occurs in 58 per cent of instances of hypoglycemia and deep coma in 40 per cent. The significance of these and other data in this table is not clear, and is not adequately explained in the text. In spite of a number of similar objections, this is a good and thorough chapter on diabetes. It should be noted that the subject of hyperinsulinism is not taken up in this or in any other chapter.

The chapters on the pituitary and thyroid written by the editor himself are based on wide experience in these fields. Illustrations of good quality and well-planned tables enhance the material presented in the text. The propri-

ety of using certain colored illustrations provided by a pharmaceutical company dealing in endocrine products can be questioned, albeit these illustrations are of superior quality.

Chapters on the adrenals, testes and ovaries are all well presented by highly competent authorities. The material on chronic adrenal hyperfunction is interestingly and lucidly written by Kepler and Locke and is exceptionally well illustrated. The discussion of adrenal cortical insufficiency by Thorn and Forsham is expertly handled. Howard and Scott include appropriate comments on the rarity of the spontaneous male climacteric in their chapter on the testes. Testicular biopsy as a diagnostic method receives only brief consideration. Smith's chapter on the ovary is well done from both the physiologic and clinical points of view. As might be anticipated, certain points are discussed on which there is no general agreement (for example, menstrual toxin as an explanation for premenstrual nervous tension).

Reifenstein's chapter on the parathyroid glands is based largely on the author's extensive experience in this field during his association with Albright at the Massachusetts General Hospital. It would be difficult to improve on this chapter. Likewise, the chapter by Wilkins on growth and development is of the highest quality. The tables include many valuable data on normal growth and development. The chapter on obesity by Newburgh provides a theoretical and practical discussion of this common problem which is both sound and conservative. The idea that obesity is not basically an endocrine problem in most instances is implicit in the discussion.

At the present stage of development of clinical endocrinology the inclusion of a chapter on the neuroendocrine and psychodynamic aspects of the endocrinopathies is probably justified. However, much of the material in Friedgood's chapter on this subject has a less sound experimental and clinical basis than most of the other material in the book. The reviewer was impressed that the length of this chapter and the number of references are out of proportion to the amount of substantial knowledge in this field. Some of the author's opinions and speculations are distinctly out of line with established thought in endocrinology.

The final chapter on "Laboratory Diagnostic and Assay Procedures" by Williams contains a good fund of concise information for those who want to know the basic principles of hormonal assays and other laboratory procedures which are employed in clinical endocrinology.

This is clearly an outstanding book on clinical endocrinology which deserves wide reading by students and physicians.

LOW-SODIUM DIET: A MANUAL FOR THE PATIENT. By Thurman R. Rice, M.D., Professor of Public Health, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, Indiana. Cloth. \$2.75. Pp. 103. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1951.

The author was placed on a low-sodium diet and wrote the book to explain how to follow it successfully. "It is the author's purpose to set forth the low-sodium diet; he makes no attempt to tell *when* it should be used; or in any way to recommend its use or its discontinuance. At all times, it is recommended that the patient using such a diet keep close to his physician for diagnosis, treatment and direction. The author, though he is a physician, makes no claim to being an authority on the subject of circulatory or other disease requiring low-sodium diet, but he is fortunate in having the advice of those who are entitled to be regarded as such. He wishes to make it very plain that this manual is not in any way intended to replace the counsel of the physician in charge of the particular clinical case."

The author achieves his goal of writing instructions in a manner simple, practical and useful. The scope of the volume is shown by the titles of certain chapters, including, "The Forms of Sodium Found in Food, Where and How Does One Get Low-Sodium Foods," "Originality and Ingenuity in the Low-Sodium Diet," "The Use of Sodium Menus," "Food Lists Rated by Content of Native Sodium," "Typical Food Charts for Study and Consideration," and "Water Supplies in Relation to Sodium Content." The appendix gives a list of companies producing acceptable "sodium-low" foods.

The book should be helpful to the physician, to the patient for whom a low-sodium diet is recommended, and also to the housewife who undertakes the responsibility of preparing his food.

RICE, DIETARY CONTROLS AND BLOOD PRESSURE WITH RECIPES AND MENUS. By Frances I. Seymour, M.D. Cloth. \$2.95. Pp. 206. Froben Press, New York, 1951.

After personal experience with the rice diet for the treatment of hypertension, Dr. Seymour, Medical Director of the National Research Foundation for Fertility, decided to write a book to give information to others. "In that way, every sufferer everywhere would have the benefit of what I had learned." Although explanation of the rice-fruit low-sodium diet is the apparent objective, the discussion wanders far afield. Nearly 100