

BOEKBESPREKING : BOOK REVIEW

TROPICAL DIABETES

Diabetes Mellitus in the Tropics. By J. A. Tulloch, M.C., M.D., F.R.C.P.E. Pp. x + 294. R3.75. Postage 16c. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1962.

This book is really better than I had expected. Professor Tulloch has plainly done a great mass of work in collecting together virtually all that is known of the problems of diabetes as it occurs in the non-White people of the tropics and subtropics.

The historical introduction is extremely interesting. On close inspection the prevalence surveys, though apparently ample, serve to indicate how little is really known in this field. The uncritical reader must beware of any direct comparisons or absolute percentages shown in text or tables, since in no two areas were the conditions and methods of study precisely the same.

The chapter on aetiology is rather superficial, not through

any fault of the author, but because we really have no idea why, for example, the urbanized Bantu is far more liable to diabetes than his rural cousin (if, in fact, this is true).

The section on treatment discusses in detail the difficulties encountered in dieting the more primitive peoples and is supplemented by a large number of food tables and dieting schemes in use in different tropical centres. In appendix E the glucose-tolerance and cortisone-glucose-tolerance methods and criteria of Fajans and Conn are set out. This side of the Atlantic we mostly use, however, quite different methods (i.e. 50 grams of glucose, capillary blood and Hagedorn-Jensen techniques), and it is regretted that these are not also mentioned. The cortisone modification cannot be recommended for routine use.

I am sure that this book will be popular. I hope we may look forward to several further editions, which will be necessary to keep pace with increasing knowledge. W.P.U.J.