

BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

PAEDIATRIC PATHOLOGY

Pediatric Pathology. By Daniel Stowens, M.D. Pp. xiii + 676. 374 figures. 160s. \$20-00. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Co. 1959.

How correctly in the preface does Dr. Stowens stress 'the lack of any other such work in the field!' That 'pediatric material comprises only a small part of the general pathologist's material' and that 'the pathology of children's diseases is a valid sub-speciality of pathology in general' are very true and pertinent observations.

The author aimed at a specialized text for pathologists with some background knowledge, but has included some clinical data. Here lies the rub—the subject material covers an extremely wide range, even the rarer disease entities of childhood being referred to, but in most instances the discussion is too brief to be of benefit to any but those already to a certain degree versed in the intricacies of child pathology. The value to the clinician is thus limited, but to the pathologist of a children's hospital it would serve as a very adequate reference volume.

The numerous photomicrographs are excellent and the format, with a wide selection of references from the relevant literature included at the end of each chapter, to a very large degree offsets the deficiency referred to. This volume has the virtue of being the only comprehensive work in the field and, written as it is for the specialist, warrants a place in the library of every pathologist who deals extensively with the diseases of children.

D.McK.

PHENOLIC HYDRAZIDES AS A TEST FOR OXOSTEROIDS

Oxosteroids: The Use of Phenolic Hydrazides for Detection, Characterization and Estimation. By Bernard Camber, M.D. Pp. viii + 79. Figures and tables. 12s. 6d. net. London: H.K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. 1960.

This book is based on a thesis by the author for the degree of Doctor of Medicine accepted by the University of Glasgow. It is an account of the uses of the new acid hydrazide reagents as applied to oxosteroids. These reagents couple with the carbonyl groups of the oxosteroids, forming hydrazones with properties (fluorescence, absorption spectra, etc.) which depend on the nature of the steroid.

The most important of these reagents is salicyloyl hydrazide. This may be used to differentiate between 7 groups of steroids of which the hydrazones have distinct fluorescence characteristics. This property gives it a potential usefulness in steroid research. *p*-Aminodiethylaniline was found to couple with salicyloyl hydrazones to form an insoluble dye with an intense blue-green colour. It may therefore prove useful as a general test for oxosteroids or as a location reagent in chromatography or histochemistry. The same reagent was found to have an important application in the colorimetric characterization and estimation of phenols.

The book contains brief reviews of present methods of determining oxosteroids and phenols but the subject matter, although presented lucidly and systematically, is unlikely to interest any other than the research biochemist specializing in this field.

A.J.D.

THE LIFE OF THE DIABETIC PATIENT

The Diabetic Life—Its Control by Diet and Insulin and Oral Treatment by Sulphonyl-ureas. 16th edition. By R. D. Lawrence, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. (Lond.). Pp. x + 230. 19 illustrations. 15s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1960.

The value of this book can be gauged from the fact that this is now the 16th edition (the 1st came out in 1925) and that it has been translated into 4 European languages. It is well known that the book is intended for the information of both the medical practitioner and the intelligent patient (or patient's family). It is essentially practical, and answers just about all the questions which the diabetic may ask. There are, for example, sections on motor driving, holidays, care of the feet, and marriage.

The need for such a book is underlined by the small pamphlet on diabetic research issued by the British Diabetic Association which accompanies it. In the United Kingdom it is estimated that there are half a million diabetics; that is an incidence of about 1% in the total population (apart from a probable equal number of 'unknown' cases). We have no reason to doubt that there is at least a similar incidence in South Africa among all racial groups except the Bantu.

The new edition includes a full and reasoned account of the sulphonylureas in treatment, from the practical angle. There seems little doubt that these 'tablets' are here to stay.

Nevertheless to your reviewer's mind there are some serious omissions and some recommendations which seem to him very questionable in the light of modern knowledge. The proneness of diabetics to urinary infection is not stressed, and catheters, even indwelling catheters, are recommended in unnecessary situations.

The recommended intake of fat in the diet still yields over 40% of the total calories, and the minimum reducing diet mentioned is still as high as 1,000 calories. The very important advent of the specific glucose-recording paper tests are briefly dismissed and their value is not considered. Finally it seems a shame that the important modern concepts of early diabetes and prediabetes are not even mentioned, and that the diabetes detection drives and population surveys are not considered. The author's adherence to two doses of soluble insulin daily in severe cases would not find favour in many places, but it is not for me to say that this is wrong.

W.P.U.J.

RADIO-ISOTOPES

Diagnostic Radioisotopes. By C. A. Owen, Jr., M.D., Ph.D. (Med.). Pp. xviii + 425. 71 figures. £6 6s. 0d. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd. 1959.

Here at last is a book on the uses of radio-isotopes in diagnosis written by a clinician for clinicians. Only the simplest physics is included and that briefly. The first 300 pages give a clear and easily assimilable précis of the subject. For those who wish to study it further, a very comprehensive bibliography is included at the end of each chapter. The 70 pages at the end are merely useful tables.

No book on this rapidly growing science can ever be really up to date, but the author is as nearly so as possible.

The book can be recommended to students of physiology, and to radiotherapists even though no therapy is included, and it should be used by specialist physicians.

The price is 6 guineas but this should not deter prospective purchasers.

R.D.T.