By confining himself to those aspects of the subject which he has personally studied, Kubli has produced an extremely useful book.


The standard of successive issues of the British Medical Bulletin is so high that one always opens a new number with a sense of excitement. This issue is on a subject in which British and Commonwealth scientists have made very significant advances in recent years. It is not surprising to find that many of the articles are contributed by colleagues, or ex-colleagues, of G. W. Harris who provides the Introduction. The subjects discussed, however, are not limited to hypothalamic-anterior pituitary relationships for there are authoritative articles on neuro-secretion and hormone content by Sloper and Heller. Non-endocrine aspects of hypothalamus are also considered, though not exhaustively. There are particularly interesting articles on temperature regulation and the hypothalamic regulation of the cardiovascular system.

One wonders whether this volume could have been made even more informative to the non-specialist if there had been a general review of the hypothalamic-anterior pituitary relationship. Doctors of middle age and onwards first became acquainted with the anterior pituitary when it was 'the leader of the endocrine orchestra'—when it was quite independent of the central nervous system in the sense that there were no nervous connexions, but nevertheless related to information coming to the sensorium and this was obviously teleologically convenient. Using P. M. Daniel’s excellent article on the blood supply as an introduction, a more modern picture of brain pituitary relationships can be built up for those who are not familiar with the present views.

It is sad to see that in the article on hypothalamic releasing factors, Harris, Reed, and Fawcett have repeated a misprint from Sir Humphrey Rolleston when it is said that Sir Richard Lower (1670) stated that ‘... serum ... tissues ... through the infundibulum'. The authors obviously appreciated that the meaning was issues and it is a pity that an error of printing in 1936 should be perpetuated in 1966. Lower’s work is reproduced in facsimile (Lower, R., De Catarrhis, 1672, trans. R. Hunter & I. Macalpine. London: Dawsons, 1963) which, fortunately for this reviewer, has an excellent translation.

Two general matters in this number are particularly admirable. Those who planned it have not shirked their duty to review work that is developing rapidly and may be superseded. In addition, individual authors seem to have stated controversial matters very fairly, even though their own position is unequivocal. This issue of the Bulletin is, like many others, required reading for endocrinologists, neurologists, and physiologists.


This volume records the proceedings of the Symposium held in October 1965, which was attended by persons of various disciplines, including paediatricians and biochemists.

In the diagnosis and treatment of patients with inborn errors, close collaboration between clinician and laboratory is essential, and for this the clinician requires a sound understanding of the underlying chemical defect.

After a review of the historical development of the concept of inborn errors, current ideas about the mechanism of protein biosynthesis are discussed in a form which the clinician will find readable. This provides a basis for the understanding of the subject.

There follow papers on congenital adrenal hyperplasia, and they provide particularly readable accounts of cortisol and aldosterone biosynthesis. It is shown how all these facts help to elucidate the clinical features of the various types of adrenogenital syndrome.

Finally, there is an article on the treatment of immunological deficiency by transplantation. This perhaps points the way towards the treatment of some inborn errors in the future.

This book is highly recommended for the clinician desirous of obtaining more insight into the chemistry of inborn errors, especially those relating to the adrenal cortex. It is nicely produced and contains useful lists of references.


The many who have had frequent cause to be grateful for the existence of Geigy’s Scientific Tables have now been provided by Drs. Plenert and Heine of East Germany with a book the size of a largish pocket book which aims to provide something of the same compendium of data related to paediatrics.

Once or twice in a lifetime one may be at a loss to know where to go to discover the normal copper content of meconium in a premature; the difference between the γ-globulin concentration in lumbar and ventricular CSF; or the amount of hyaluronidase in cord blood. Here, such recondite facts can be found, along of course with those of a more mundane kind, including some which might surely have been dispensed with (e.g. that the ‘normal’ Wassermann reaction is ‘negative’).

References are given, though it would have been useful to quote also some alternative sources of data. But an almost incredible omission is the absence of an index, without which a reference book of this kind must lose half its usefulness. With so serious a handicap, few paediatricians unfamiliar with German will bother to