
This volume is the twelfth in the series of Ciba Foundation Colloquia on Endocrinology, and included in this book is an index to all twelve volumes. According to the preface these published proceedings of small informal conferences are "intended for a world-wide readership, especially in regions where recent and adequately representative literature is difficult to come by," and it may fairly be said that in this new publication these aims have been amply fulfilled. The international flavor is exemplified by the origins of the participants, ranging from Bombay to Kansas.

The first two contributions deal with experimental induction of functioning pituitary tumours in mice, rats, and hamsters. Out of this work arises the interesting possibility that monomorphic pituitary tumours may one day be grown in vitro as a source of tropic hormones. Next Dr. Tata discourses on the interesting finding of an iodinated protein—distinct from thyroglobulin—in the plasma of nearly 60 per cent of cases of untreated thyroid carcinoma, in addition to the normally occurring thyroxine, triiodothyronine, and inorganic iodide.

Dr. Dorfman reviews the ways in which studies of human tumour slices incubated with steroids have thrown light on androgen, estrogen, and corticoid biosynthesis. A refreshing analysis of clinical adrenal abnormalities is made by Dr. Alice Robinson and her co-workers from St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. The positive significance of grossly elevated levels of urinary 17-ketosteroids and 3β-hydroxy-17-ketosteroids in indicating an adrenal tumour is reaffirmed, as well as the fact that normal levels do not exclude it. Opinion seems to be hardening that "idiopathic hirsuties" may represent a biochemical abnormality intermediate in severity between the normal state and frank virilism. Cortisone reduces the 17-ketosteroid excretion to normal in these patients and restores menstruation, without, however, affecting the hirsuties.

A pair of clinical papers comes from Dr. Hamburger of Copenhagen, who analyses the excretion of chorionic and hypophysial gonadotropins in malignant testis tumours, and of chorionic gonadotropins in cases of hydatidiform mole and chorionepithelioma of the uterus.

Chromaffin and islet-cell tumours, as well as cysts and granulosa-cell tumours of the ovary, are all discussed, and it is clear that adequate coverage of the endocrine field has been achieved. Considering the specialised nature of the material at first sight, it is surprising how much there is of interest, if not of value, to general physicians.

Denis Abelson


This book is primarily an annotated and illustrated manual of procedures employed in the author's laboratory. The coverage is rather compre-