

PROTIDES OF THE BIOLOGICAL FLUIDS Proceedings of the ninth Colloquium, Bruges, 1961. Edited by H. Peeters. (Pp. x + 373 including index of authors and of subjects; 247 figures; 60 tables. Dfl. 45.-.) Amsterdam: Elsevier. 1962.

This volume contains the text of four plenary lectures, the discussions of a round table conference, and 64 other contributions of varying length and value, of which about half are in English and the remainder are in either French or German. The various articles are classified in sections: Analytical Methods, Protein Structure, Protein Turnover and Metabolism, Carrier Function of Proteins, Proteins and Genetics, Isolated Fractions. From the standpoint of the practising clinical pathologist, the interest of the individual items varies greatly. On the one hand are papers likely to be of interest only to workers in a particular field; on the other hand a few of the contributions review work of considerable general interest.

Published proceedings of congresses, colloquia, and meetings of different kinds are becoming ever more numerous amongst medical publications: the value of publishing the proceedings of such meetings is in some cases very doubtful. When the contributions give an up-to-date survey of knowledge in a particular field, there is a good deal to be said for publication as rapidly and as cheaply as possible. Original work would be better published in appropriate journals. Most original work will, in any case, be published elsewhere and there seems little point in publishing the same matter twice. Furthermore work published in a scientific journal is accepted by the editor on its merits: the proceedings of a meeting include everything, good and bad alike.

This volume is attractive and well produced but there seems insufficient justification for its appearance.

ARTHUR JORDAN

ENTEROBACTERIACEAE-INFEKTIONEN Edited by J. Sedlak and H. Rische. (Pp. xxiv + 480. DM 53.10.) Leipzig: Georg Thieme. 1961.

The post-war years have been marked by signal advances in the study of the *Enterobacteriaceae*. Methods of isolation and identification have been improved, the ecology of the group has been greatly clarified, and its classification more clearly defined. The rapid development of phage typing has advanced the epidemiological study of infections caused by many members of the group. Studies of recombination and phage-mediated transduction have shed much light on the genetic make-up of these organisms. Finally, the detailed analysis of the antigenic polysaccharides has brought chemical evidence for the validity of serological classification.

Such has been the pace of this progress that a great deal of valuable information has accumulated which is inaccessible to the average worker because of its very volume. It is pleasant, therefore, to find a group of authors sufficiently energetic to summarize much of the published material in this field. The result is a book of manageable size in which the *Enterobacteriaceae* are reviewed from most of the aspects mentioned above and adequate (perhaps occasionally too much) attention is paid to documentation.

The book opens with a general chapter on the *Enterobacteriaceae*, in which the classification, biochemical properties, antigenic structures, variability, and pathogenicity of the group are reviewed. Among the introductory chapters is one dealing with the diagnosis of infections with members of the group. Methods of specimen collection and dispatch are outlined here, and the various selective, enrichment, and differential media named and their merits discussed. A diagnostic table is presented of the different 'genera' of *Enterobacteriaceae*, as defined by their biochemical reactions. The principles of the Widal test are described as is also the use of specific antisera in the diagnosis of serotypes.

As might be expected, one of the larger chapters is devoted to the *Salmonellae*, and the microbiology, diagnostic bacteriology, epidemiology, and preventive medicine of these organisms are minutely described. The enteric fevers are considered within this chapter, although many workers would be of the opinion that they merited a chapter to themselves. In the description of salmonella food poisoning, a comparison of the incidence of serotypes in a number of countries is given, in which a somewhat out-of-date picture is presented of the incidence and frequency distribution of serotypes in the United Kingdom, because pre-war figures are used which antedate the meticulous attention now devoted to these infections in this country. Much later figures are available and should have been used. (There is a misprint in the text at this point, the English figures being erroneously quoted as covering the period 1933-1938 instead of 1923-1928.) Nevertheless, the early figures, small though they are by modern standards, show the predominance of *S. typhimurium* in salmonella food poisoning, a position it has maintained to the present day.

The relative importance of various foods and of rodents and other animals as sources of salmonellosis is considered. A useful section of this chapter is devoted to the prophylaxis of salmonellosis. Attention is drawn to the greater sensitivity of young children and the aged to salmonella infections. It is stated that the clinical picture and outcome in very young children are independent of the infecting serotype, that is, that there is a high and equal sensitivity to all serotypes in this age group.

The foregoing example will indicate the detail entered into in the exposition of the various subdivisions of the *Enterobacteriaceae*. Although it is obvious that the greatest amount of information must be presented on those groups that have long established their importance, such as *Salmonella* and *Shigella*, the authors have fully explored the literature in the treatment of groups whose rightful position, taxonomically and ecologically, is still being debated. Thus, *Arizona*, *Citrobacter*, *Escherichia*, *Klebsiella*, *Cloaca*, and others are scrutinized as closely as the work up to about 1959 will permit.

The development of the phage-typing method during recent years has made possible important advances in the epidemiological study of the *Enterobacteriaceae*. The first effective scheme was that for the typing of *S. typhi* by Vi-phages, introduced by Craigie and Yen in 1938. Felix recognized the epidemiological importance of this scheme and was largely responsible for its international adoption. He also, in association with Miss B. R. Callow,

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CORRECTIONS

In the paper 'Observations on the use of the Coulter model D electronic cell counter in clinical haematology' (Blades, A. N., and Flavell, H. C. G., *J. clin. Path.*, 16, 158-163) Fig. 9 should be Fig. 8 and *vice versa*. Also on page 163, col. 1, line 3 should read 'gives a blank count at a threshold level of 5 of about 300 per 0.5 ml.'

In the book reviewed on page 185 by E. S. Anderson of ENTEROBACTERIACEAEINFEKTIONEN the sentence '(There is a misprint . . . 1923-1928.)' should read '(There is a misprint in the text at this point, the English figures being erroneously quoted as covering the period 1933-38 instead of 1923-1938.)'