

The Adrenal Cortex and Intersexuality. By L. R. BROSTER, C. ALLEN, H. W. C. VINES, J. PATTERSON, A. W. GREENWOOD, G. F. MARRIAN and G. C. BUTLER. London: Chapman & Hall. Pp. xii + 245. Price 15s.

This valuable work contains an account of the clinical, surgical, pathological, biochemical and psychological aspects of the adreno-genital syndrome.

The clinical and surgical section deals with cases of virilism operated on at Charing Cross Hospital. The cases are divided into four groups—prepubertal and postpubertal virilism, the Achard Thiers syndrome and post-menopausal virilism. Thirty-three cases in all were operated on by means of unilateral adrenalectomy. There was a definite tendency towards the disappearance of the acquired male characters and a return to the feminine form and functions. In some cases homosexuality was restored to normal heterosexuality.

Cells staining with a new differential stain were found in large numbers in the cortex.

Failure of the endocrine factor in sexuality, such as occurs in adrenal virilism, may prevent the normal psychical development. Some cases of adrenal virilism show a lack of sexual interest in others and a concentration of interest on to the self; this the authors call autosexuality.

The pathological section is very well done. It is suggested that in the normal mechanism of sexual development the adrenal cortex plays the part of a bisexual accessory sex-gland which is active throughout life, and that it secretes both androgenic and oestrogenic hormones under the control of the pituitary—which control may be affected through the action of the adrenotropic hormone or of prolactin. In pituitary basophilism the pituitary is primarily at fault and the adrenal cortex secondarily.

In the biochemical section it was found that 11 out of 14 cases of adrenal virilism showed the presence of free male hormone in the urine—this substance is absent from normal female urine. Unilateral adrenalectomy caused either the disappearance of the male hormone or its reduction to small quantities.

A new substance, pregnane 3-17-20 triol ($C_{21}H_{36}O_3$) has been isolated from the urine of some typical virilism cases; this substance does not occur in normal urines, and is apparently specifically related to the pathological activity of the adrenal gland. The book is a most interesting and valuable addition to the literature on the adrenal gland.

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Oxford Survey of Social Services: The Mental Health Services. By E. F. PINSENT, C.B.E. Oxford: The University Press. Pp. 87. Price 2s.

This small book gives a good account of the mental health services in the county and city of Oxford and in Berkshire. Both mental deficiency and mental disorders are dealt with.

In the chapter on mental health it is a pity that the following statement occurs: "it allowed the reception of temporary patients on the *certificate* of two medical practitioners . . ." Of course the word should be "recommendation". The whole aim is to avoid the word "certification". So the lay mind still does not see the medical point of view.

Amongst the general conclusions the writer supports the advisability of