NUTRITIONAL FACTORS AND LIVER DISEASES*

THIS symposium is an outstanding contribution to our knowledge and understanding of recent work on nutritional liver diseases. Experimental work in laboratory animals has established the conception that certain specific food materials are essential for the well-being of the liver parenchyma and that deficiency of these nutriments can produce damage to the liver as serious as any noxious substance This has opened out new ground as yet unexplored in our interpretation and understanding of various obscure liver diseases which are now proved to be nutritional in origin. During recent years there has been a phenomenal increase of research in this direction in many laboratories especially in America and Europe and a remarkable array of facts has been brought to light. Time is ripe that these isolated pieces of knowledge should be put together into a complete picture and this is what the symposium has tried to do with conspicuous success In a collection of carefully selected papers, it brings together the findings of various important workers in this field of scientific research scattered all over the world. An opportunity is thus afforded to compare and correlate the observations and conclusions of experimental work on laboratory animals with several obscure liver diseases prevalent in human beings especially in Asia and Africa.

Animal experiments have clearly shown that two distinct types of hepatic lesions are produced by deficient diets. In one case, there is a disturbance in the transport and utilisation of fat resulting in an intense fatty infiltration of the liver cells which, when long continued, develop a progressive diffuse fibrosis resembling Laennec's Cirrhosis. The other hepatic lesion brought about by deficient diet in experimental animals is massive necrosis, which either ends fatally or tends to heal with resultant scarring and nodular hyperplasia. Following these two separate disease entities of nutritional origin the symposium is divided into two main parts—one being devoted to fatty liver and cirrhotic diseases and the other to necrotic liver injuries.

Taking conditions in India, there is growing evidence to show that the fatty cirrhosis of the liver common in South India is a deficiency disease, closely similar in development to the pattern seen in experimental animals. But the specific type of cirrhosis seen in infants (infantile cirrhosis) common in several parts of India does not fit into any of the deficiency groups. Its cause and pathogenesis still remains vague and obscure.

This symposium is a valuable addition to our knowledge of liver diseases. It is bound to be of immense value to every worker in this field—clinician, pathologist or biochemist.

G. D. VELIATH.

* By Klaus Schwarz and 58 other Scientists. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, Volume 57, Art. 6, pages 615–962, Price $ 4.50.

DR. D. M. BOSE

DR D M BOSE, Director, Bose Institute, was felicitated on the occasion of his seventieth birth anniversary by his admirers, colleagues, pupils and friends at an impressive ceremony held on March 6, 1955, at Bose Institute, Calcutta. Many distinguished citizens of Calcutta including educationists, scientists and others attended the function and messages from eminent scientists and men of public affairs from all parts of the country recalling the contribution of Dr. Bose to the progress of science in India and extending for nearly half a century, were read out.

Dr. H. C. Mookherjee, Governor of West Bengal, was the Chief Guest on the occasion and he along with Prof. M. N. Saha, Director, Institute of Nuclear Physics, and Prof. S. K. Mitra, Director, Institute of Radiophysics and Electronics, Calcutta, recounted the distinguished scientist's valuable contribution to the progress of science and scientific education in the country

A special volume of the *Transactions of the Bose Research Institute*, containing a collection of papers contributed by 20 eminent scientists of India and abroad was dedicated to Dr. Bose on this occasion.