

*Hoppe-Seyler/Thierfelder, Handbuch der Physiologisch- und Pathologisch-chemischen Analyse für Ärzte, Biologen und Chemiker*, Zehnte Auflage, herausgegeben von K. LANG UND E. LEHNARTZ, unter Mitarbeit von G. SIEBERT.

Fünfter Band. *Untersuchung der Organe, Körperflüssigkeiten und Ausscheidungen*, bearbeitet von F. BRUNS, H. D. CREMER, W. DIEMAIR, C. DITTMAR, J. FÜHR, W. GEINITZ, K. GEMEINHARDT†, K. HINSBERG, G. SCHMID.

Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Göttingen, Heidelberg, 1953. IX + 938 pages, DM 168,—.

This is the 10th Edition of the well-known "Hoppe-Seyler/Thierfelder", which has served so many generations of physicians and biochemists as a guide in their laboratory work. Obviously this Edition will be published in several big volumes, as the first one that has come from the press bears number V. The 9th Edition, the 3rd one edited by THIERFELDER (in 1924), comprised only one volume of about the same size as the present Vth volume. Hence the increase in size is enormous. This may have been dictated by the overwhelming progress of biochemistry during the last decades. Yet I doubt whether this is the only reason and I wonder whether the book has improved by it.

According to THIERFELDER's Preface to the 7th Edition of 1902, the size had gradually increased since 1858, but always every method included had been carefully controlled by HOPPE-SEYLER. Though it is evident that it was impossible to continue this praiseworthy tradition, under THIERFELDER's direction the book has remained what it had been from its conception, a handbook of laboratory praxis. But now great parts of it, at any rate of the volume reviewed, appear to have degenerated into a treatise of descriptive biochemistry. This applies in particular to the chapters "Untersuchung der Organe" by H. D. CREMER AND J. FÜHR, and "Untersuchung von Tumoren" by C. DITTMAR. In the reviewer's opinion from a methodical point of view the best chapters are those on blood and urine by K. HINSBERG and various collaborators, and that on "Nachweis wichtiger Arzneimittel und Gifte" von K. GEMEINHARDT. No objection can be raised against the composition of W. DIEMAIR's chapter on milk, though it is very short and therefore unavoidably very incomplete; the references to literature of this chapter almost exclusively concern German literature. The same applies to GEMEINHARDT's contribution. The other parts, however, those mentioned included which have lost the features of a handbook of biochemical methods, are conspicuous for their international orientation.

H. G. K. WESTENBRINK (Utrecht)

*Standard Methods of Clinical Chemistry*, Vol. I. By the American Association of Clinical Chemists. Editor-in-Chief: MIRIAM REINER. Academic Press Inc., New York 1953. xii and 142 pages, 6 figures. \$ 4.50.

As stated by the editorial committee in their preface, this book is the first of a series of "Standard Methods" to be published by the American Association of Clinical Chemists. By issuing a number of small volumes the Association hopes to keep the series up to date, as this way of publishing allows frequent revision of some methods without re-issue of all.

The presentation is modelled on the excellent series of "Organic Syntheses": Certain clinical chemists have been asked to submit the method of their choice—this choice being guided by a consensus of colleagues who regularly use such a method—, it has then been checked in other laboratories and in the final publication all results and comments have been incorporated.

Each method is treated along the following lines: Introduction and/or Principle, Reagents, Procedure, Calculation, Normal Values, Abnormal Values, Discussion or Comments, Precautions and Notes, Literature. (All these items do not necessarily appear in each presentation.) This treatment has the great advantage over the cookery-book type of laboratory manual that it promotes a more critical attitude and a better understanding in those who consult the book.

The requirements of a routine clinical chemical laboratory which often dictate a sacrifice of precision to speed and simplicity are reflected in the choice of techniques: of the 19 methods described in this volume 12 are colorimetric, as against 4 titrimetric and 3 other procedures. Workers who have already chosen their own methods will not necessarily agree in all respects with the selection made here; for instance, the reviewer regrets that the time-honoured micro-Kjeldahl nitrogen determination has had to make place for a biuret method of protein estimation, while the method proposed for urea nitrogen seems to be a bit tricky. But the man who has to set up a new clinical laboratory can safely entrust himself to the directions given in this book, for the drawbacks of some procedures are discussed in a straightforward manner. A choice of "old favourites", e.g. Kramer and Tisdall's calcium determination and the Folin-Wu glucose estimation, is combined with modern methods as flame photometry of sodium and potassium and the Nelson-Somogyi procedure for glucose.