After discussions by Drs. Mosonyi and Preisach, Dr. Kahán spoke about the importance of antihistamines in ophthalmology, and found that as combined with privine they were useful in local therapy. Hajós emphasized that in ophthalmology and dermatology the antihistamines have better results than in bronchial asthma, where contributory factors beside histamine formation in the patho-mechanism had greater role and cannot be influenced by antihistamines.

June 7, 1949. Dr. Radnóti-Recht discussed intrinsic factors influencing childhood allergy, emphasizing own experiences and experiments in tuberculine allergy. Dr. Ladányi spoke about 10% sodium citrate used in allergic conditions as based on rhinological investigations, giving for explanation, calcium and other electrolytic changes of the tissues. Mosonyi, Csefko, Simo, Sandelhausen discussed the papers. Hajós explained Ladányi’s treatment with the action of hyper-sonic injections used in allergic paroxysms.

Following questions are scheduled for discussion in the September meeting: Allergic occupational diseases (prevention, rehabilitation). The action of antibiotics in allergic diseases. Several papers about the role of the liver in allergic conditions.

Book Reviews – Livres nouveaux – Buchbesprechungen


Undoubtedly, this new book is one of the most important medical publications of recent years. The brilliant and extensive experimental work of Hans Selye and his school covers many important fields and actual problems of physiology and pathology and is at the same time rich in new ideas, therefore a summarizing and authoritative interpretation of the results must be welcomed by all research workers and clinicians.

According to the conception of Selye anything, which endangers life or disturbs vital functions in some way causes stress and adaptive responses. «Adapt-ability and resistance to stress are fundamental prerequisites for life and every vital organ function participates in them.» This statement by Selye outlines the extent of the field and the complexity of the matter. Selye and his school studied with most ingenious methods the effect of various stresses (i.e. infections, poisoning, exposure to cold or heat, irradiations, exercise, fasting etc.) on the body of experimental animals and they described a number of characteristic systemic reactions the s.c. «general adaptation syndrome». This syndrome has three successive stages, the «alarm reaction» (shock and counter-shock), the «stage of re-sistance» and the «stage of exhaustion». One of the most important effects of this syndrome is a change in the function of the adrenal cortex, resulting in increased secretion of corticoids. This secretion starts through neuro-humoral mechanisms, a.o. through an increase of ACTH-production. Many of the symptoms of the general adaptation syndrome are effected through the hypophysis, whose hormons affect the adrenal cortex. The hormons of the adrenal cortex (a.o. Cortisone) induce functions on which resistance is based. Resistance depends to a great extent on the secretion of gluco-corticotrophic hormones (for instance ACTH) and gluco-corticoids (i.e. Cortisone). Selye and co-workers found
that a number of the characteristic lesions which stresses of various kind produce in the tissues of animals, can under certain circumstances be imitated by treatment of the animals with mineralocorticoids, such as desoxycortone and desoxycortisone. In this way stresses not only induce adaptive processes but also through improper hormonal balance «diseases of adaptations, a.o. rheumatic and allergic diseases.

It is perhaps not unnecessary to mention that the discovery of the therapeutic value of ACTH and Cortisone for just the rheumatic-allergic type of disease by Hench, Kendall and their collaborators was made independently of the work of Selye. The important results of Hench seem however to confirm the hypothesis of Selye. It is indeed noteworthy that Selye only three years ago («Textbook of Endocrinology», Montreal 1947) was convinced that «corticotrophic pituitary extracts frequently produce arthritis in the rat». Now he explains this fact by a new pituitary hormon, «Factor X», the existence of which is not yet confirmed. New work, which shows the ineffectivity of ACTH in anaphylactic and histamine shock (Friedlaender and Friedlaender), is also in strict contrast to the by Selye presumed antihistaminic and anti allergic effect of glucocorticoids.

It is beyond all doubt that Selye and his co-workers have done a great deal of valuable work in this intriguing field, but the fact is that much more work must be done, before we can clearly see all the relations and connections between these complicated functions. Selye’s book would perhaps win on clarity and would be more able to be a guide for future research work, if the author had kept more to fact than to constructions and hypothesis. The tendency to bring the experimental results of the > SWy«-team in accordance with those of Hench and others is perhaps necessary and in some respects fruitful, but at the same time too forced and glancing over and avoiding the facts. Selye collected an enormous literature, the references fill 203 pages. More criticism in the choice would perhaps give better aid to the reader. It is sometimes difficult to decide how the author himself values the innumerable quoted results. This can perhaps be remedied in the next edition.

Selye promises to continue his valuable experimental work and we await with greatest interest the coming results. «Stress» is an unusually valuable book and absolutely indispensable for all workers in the field of allergy and immunology. Print and illustrations are excellent. Paul Kallós.


It seldom happens that one has the sure feeling of reading an epoch-making contribution to medical science and to the welfare of mankind. In the Fall of 1946 The Armour Laboratories made a preparation of Adrenocorticotropic Hormon (ACTH) available for intensive physiological studies in human beings. George W. Thorn and associates were the first to study this hormone. In December 1948 Edith B. Farnsworth found that ACTH benefit the clinical status of nephrotic patients substantially and in January 1949 Philip Hench made his first observations that ACTH dramatically alters the course of rheumatoid arthritis and of other s.c. «collagen diseases», facts which confirm the hypothesis of Hench that there may be an adrenal-cortical defect underlying these diseases. The Editor of «Proceed-ings» very rightly states, that already from these first observations: «It was obvious that something fundamental in human physiology had been encountered in view of the fact that the clinical status of patients was substantially altered when the adrenal cortex was stimulated in widely divergent syndromes» such as myasthenia gravis, lupus erythematosus, nephrosis, gout, rheumatoid arthritis and various allergic diseases. In order
to co-ordinate the research work and make an exchange of information and ideas possible, the producers of ACTH, The Armour Laboratories, called all investigators to a Conference in Chicago on October 21 and 22, 1949, the «Proceedings» of which now are available in print, masterly edited by Doctor Mote. It is impossible to review the 52 excellent lectures and the illuminating discussion. A careful study of this book cannot be neglected. The contents of these lectures are a milestone in medical history and a triumph for American Science and Pharmaceutical Industry. It is to be hoped that the benefit

News Items – Nouvelles – Nachrichten

of these great discoveries can in the near future be available for wider circles and consequently it is not only important but also a boon to all research workers and clinicians that The Armour Laboratories have sponsored the publishing of this book. Paul Kallós.


The University of Illinois Allergy Unit, Colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy, 1853 West Polk Street, Chicago 12, Ill., is announcing a Course in Allergy for clinicians. The primary purpose of the course is to give physicians an understanding of those conditions which are usually classified as allergic, so that they can diagnose and treat them competently. The course in allergy is accredited for one year (October 1950-October 1951) towards the formal training requirements of either the American Board of Internal Medicine or of the American Board of Dermatology. The course is approved for training under the G. I. Bill of Rights. Enrollement is limited to six students.

The Fall Graduate Instructional Course of the American College of Allergists will be held in Chicago, Ill., at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, February 9-11, 1951. At the same time the College is announcing his Seventh Annual Congress, which will be held at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, February 11-14, 1951. All those planning to attend are urged to contact the Secretary’s office, 423 La Salle Medical Building, Minneapolis 2, Minnesota, for detailed informations. The American College of Allergists established a «Rheumatism and Arthritis Committee» under chairmanship of Dr. George E. Rockwell. The Board of Regents of the College has decided that the subject for next year’s panel discussion will be «The Allergic Aspects of Rheumatism and Arthritis».
The Board of Regents of the American College of Allergists decided to establish a «Permanent Committee on Pediatric Allergy» and a «Committee on Psychosomatic Allergy». Dr. Bret Ratner is chairman of the pediatric and Dr. H. A. Abramson of the psychosomatic committee. Vol. 21, Number 4, July 1950 of «Journal of Allergy» marks the retirement of Dr. Harry L. Alexander as Editor of the Journal, a position he has held since the establishment of this publication in 1929. The new Editor is Dr. W.B. Sherman, M. D., Roosevelt Hospital, 428 W. 59th Street, New York 19, N. Y.