

ANNOTATIONS

CALCIUM AND PHOSPHOROUS IN FOODS AND NUTRITION¹

Dr. Sherman's little book, 115 pages of text plus a 44-page selected bibliography and an adequate index, was intended by the author to be useful to both students and professional workers, "whether in teaching or in practical dietetics, research, nutrition policy, or food management." The book is all of that and, in addition, research workers and practitioners in branches of the medical sciences other than nutrition undoubtedly will be interested in Dr. Sherman's exposition of his philosophy of optimum health. The liberal bibliography on experimental work in the field of calcium and phosphorous metabolism by itself makes this book a desirable item for the reference shelf of all workers in the field of nutrition. The mass of facts and experimental data in the text is well indexed, further increasing the value of the book for reference purposes.

In spite of the large amount of data and references to experimental work which Dr. Sherman has included in its 115 pages, the book is quite easy and very interesting reading. The data given regarding the levels of calcium and phosphorous in the various tissues of the body at various ages and under various metabolic conditions, along with background information on how these figures were derived, are very useful. The same must be said of the information given on the calcium and phosphorous content of foods and the factors conditioning the availability of these elements in foods to the animal organism, but, for this reviewer, the greatest interest and importance is attached to Dr. Sherman's exposition of the meaning of optimum nutrition and

¹ Sherman, Henry C.: CALCIUM AND PHOSPHOROUS IN FOODS AND NUTRITION. New York, Columbia University Press, 1947. \$2.75.

optimum health. The utility of this concept goes far beyond the field of calcium and phosphorous metabolism. A few direct quotations from the book should serve to interest the readers of this review sufficiently to read the work in its entirety:

“Passably normal health can be maintained for a lifetime and even through successive generations—on very different levels of calcium intake and output—. Yet differences within the range of this normal zone may influence the degree of positive health and of satisfactoriness of individual and family life history attained;—.”

“Hence the most scientific ground to take on this subject at present would seem to be that somewhat over one gram each of calcium and phosphorous is advantageous in human nutrition; and that with intakes of both of these elements at this approximate level we have no occasion for anxiety as to the precise ratio between them.”

“—, it may well be pointed out here that the principle of the nutritional improbability of the norm (is) now so well established by recent and current research upon the full-life and successive-generation effects of different liberal levels of calcium and of vitamin A,—.”

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