

The former editions of this "blue bible of pharmacology" are so well known that the present edition does not require extensive discussion. This reviewer is concerned about the size of this treatise; no medical student can hope to read and retain even the highlights of this enormous book, much of which is set in small type. As pharmacology departments try to convey to their students a scientific approach to their field, a smaller, more theory-oriented text could be handled more easily in the short time available. Therefore the present book is bound to become more of a graduate text and reference volume, and lose its appeal as an undergraduate medical school text. Much of the material in *materia medica*, prescription writing, and correlation with fundamentals of physiology will probably lose its original impact since the type of readership is bound to change.

In order to bind 1800 pages under one cover, the publishers have used very thin paper. This paper folds and is scarred by repeated use. Even if the rapid flux of much of pharmacology would not require a new edition by 1975, the physical deterioration of the books in 5 years will make this necessary. No doubt, the next Goodman and Gilman will be as good as this one.

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ALFRED BURGER

**Human Schistosomiasis.** By PETER JORDAN and GERALD WEBBE. Charles C. Thomas. Springfield, Ill. 1970. xii + 212 pp. 14 × 22.2 cm. \$8.75.

Schistosomiasis, once essentially a tropical snail-borne trematode infection, has been disseminated to various parts of the world by increased irrigation projects which offered wider opportunities for infestation with infected snail vectors. WHO estimated in 1965 that 150–200 × 10<sup>6</sup> patients suffer from this parasitemia, and the chemotherapy of the disease has become of interest even to the pharmaceutical industry in the Western world since the trematodes no longer invade indigent peoples only. It was therefore timely to summarize the existing knowledge and experience, and we may be grateful to the expert authors for their labor of love in writing this well-documented and readable monograph.

The book describes the parasites, their life cycles, and the relationships to their hosts; the infection with various schistosomes, and the symptoms of these invasions. Diagnostic and

clinical laboratory investigations from detection to autopsy are discussed, and the epidemiology of social, economic, immunological, animal reservoir, and other factors prerequisite for control is set forth. For our readership the chapter on chemotherapy of schistosomiasis is of special interest. Detailed accounts are given of niridazole, lucanthone, antimonials, trichlorophone, and other schistosomicides. The final chapter is devoted to the control of the spread of the disease by limiting snail population, improving sanitation, and many other methods.

The low price of this small volume, its accuracy, good print, and pleasing appearance make it easy to recommend the book to our readers.

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ALFRED BURGER

**A Handbook of Alkaloids and Alkaloid-Containing Plants.** ROBERT F. RAFFAUF. Wiley-Interscience. New York, N. Y. 1970. Pages unnumbered (estimated 1000). 16 × 23.5 cm. Photo-offset. \$50.00.

This massive book contains 6 sections of photostated computer print-out listings: chemical nomenclature, botanical nomenclature, molecular formulas, molecular weights, structure tables, and structural formulas. If one wants to look up information about a given alkaloid, one has to find it by chemical or botanical nomenclature or molecular formula or weight, then try to find its ring system in the structural formulas, and go back to structure tables which contain the functional groups. There is no comment, no readable information: the interpretation of the data is left to the user, according to the preface.

The main value of this book is the inclusion of many alkaloids from difficultly accessible compendia in the less common foreign languages. This asset will have to compensate for the trouble the reader will have in finding his way through the maze of scattered data if he wants to locate a given alkaloid. Pharmacognosists will profit more than chemists from the use of this volume. However, a painful search in this book will save time over a less painful but more extended search in *Chemical Abstracts* or *Beilstein*.

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