

Book Reviews

PHARMACOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS FOR STUDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS OF MEDICINE. By Horatio C. Wood, Jr., M. D., Professor of Pharmacology and Therapeutics in the Medico-Chirurgical College; Physician to the Medico-Chirurgical Hospital, Second Vice-Chairman of the Committee of Revision of the U. S. Pharmacopœia. Philadelphia and London, J. B. Lippincott Company; 8 vo., pp. 429.

The purpose held in view by the author of this excellent work can be best expressed by quoting the opening paragraphs of his preface:

"The last two decades have witnessed extraordinary advances in all branches of medical science, but in none of them more striking than in pharmacology. Twenty years ago this department of medical knowledge was a jumble of isolated facts; today it is an orderly science. Our knowledge of the changes produced by drugs in the bodily function has been enormously increased, but more important than this expansion in our information as to what drugs do, is the fact that we are beginning to understand how they do it, and thereby to become able to correlate the facts of drug action. The present conception of pharmacology is utterly different from that of a generation ago.

"Owing partly to this epochal advancement in the science of pharmacology, and in part to the new ideas of teaching which have been introduced into the whole medical curriculum, there has been in the last ten years a revolution in the methods of teaching pharmacology. The old style of text-book of materia medica and therapeutics is so fundamentally at variance with modern ideas that it is almost impossible to make it conform to the needs of the present-day student. The author has had this conviction brought home with more and more force by each succeeding class of students for several years, and it is the feeling that there was need of a book which should present the concept of today in a form sufficiently concise and comprehensive to be available for the ordinary student which has led to the preparation of this work."

It is gratifying also to read further, that: "The author feels equally strongly that pharmacology is of no value to the medical student save as a basis for practical therapeutics, and the more clearly the student can be made to perceive the relation between pharmacological science and the clinical employment of drugs for the relief of human suffering, just so much more value will his pharmacology become to him, and the more successful will be his future therapeutics. There is sometimes a tendency today to condemn the so-called practical branches of the medical course, and to unduly exalt the scientific branches, just as a few years ago there was a very evident tendency in the opposition direction. The author believes that for the sake of impressing the student with the importance of a knowledge of the fundamental science, as well as to assist him in the associating of its facts, it is advisable that both scientific facts and their clinical application should each receive its due amount of attention in a book on therapeutics, and

he has endeavored to subordinate neither the science nor its application in this present work, but to emphasize their mutual interdependence."

Perfect success in the carrying out of these ideas is not to be expected of any individual, but within the limits assigned by the 400 odd pages, and the necessity of adapting the work to the comprehension of students, the author has produced a creditable and useful volume.

A preliminary study of pharmaceutical data, of prescription-writing and of the mode of action of drugs makes up the first chapter. The succeeding chapters are devoted to different classes of medicaments, as follows:

Chapter II. Drugs used to affect secretion: Diuretics; Diaphoretics; Expectorants; Drugs which diminish secretion.

Chapter III. Drugs used to affect the nervous system: Somnifacients: Anesthetics; Analgesics; Spinal depressants; Motor nerve paralyzants; Sensory nerve paralyzants.

Chapter IV. Drugs used to affect circulation: Cardiac stimulants; Vasomotor stimulants; Drugs which reduce blood pressure; Treatment of chronic heart disease.

Chapter V. Drugs used to affect the alimentary tract: Stomachics; Emetics; Cathartics.

Chapter VI. Drugs affecting metabolic processes.

Chapter VII. Drugs acting on causes of disease: Anthelmintics; Antimalarials; Disinfectants.

Chapter VIII. Extraneous remedies: Digestants: Alkalies, Demulcents, Emollients, Counter-irritants, Escharotics.

Chapter IX. Drugs of minor importance.

There is a fair index.

The text is not only meaty, but also well flavored, the author's style being lucid and concise.

There are a number of illustrations elucidating various points in the action or application of remedies, but the book is not over-loaded with tracings or elaborate diagrams. In fact, the most striking feature of the author's work is temperate restraint in the matter of laboratory detail. There is sufficient to give the student a good idea of what the laboratory can do, and of the facts which have actually been established concerning the various medicaments discussed, but he is not confused either with elaborate protocols of individual experiments, or with numerous reports of conflicting observations.

A good feature of the book, and one which is to be highly commended, is the recognition of the great part played by the autonomic nervous system in physiology, in pathology and in therapeutics. It is also refreshing to find allusions to (and sometimes studies of) a number of drugs which are either not official or not frequently referred to in recognized medical literature; for example, Apocynum, Convallaria and Adonidin, which the author classes as cardiac stimulants; the Peroxide salts and Methylthionine among disinfectants and antimalarials; Theophyllin among diuretics; Grindelia among expectorants; etc.

On the other hand, we are sorry to miss studies on Quebracho and its alkaloids, which Wood is peculiarly well qualified to treat of, since he himself has

done a valuable piece of experimental work upon these agents, and is not unfamiliar with their clinical uses. We are also sorry to find nothing about Cactus, which is important enough to demand consideration from both the clinical and the laboratory sides, and concerning which much pharmacologic nonsense on the one hand and clinical extravagance on the other, have been published. An authority like Wood, who understands and can correlate experimental and clinical work, could do much to settle the vexed questions concerning this medicament. It may be, however, that these omissions, which can only be deliberate, were imposed upon the author by his plan already alluded to, to omit that which would disturb the student without corresponding advantage. We can hope, however, that in some future study, whether text-book or otherwise, he will give practicing physicians the advantage of this knowledge concerning these two very important drugs.

There is a brief but judicious article upon Salvarsan; and other non-official but well attested synthetic compounds, such as heroin, dionin, etc., also obtain recognition.

Concerning the classification adopted by the author, which follows in a measure that of his illustrious father, it is to be said that it is understandable and practicable, and is much to be preferred to the no-classification plan. It is not perfect, but a perfect classification is indeed impossible. The reviewer's classification differs from that of the author, but this is not the place to discuss the relative values of two different approximations to an ideal impossible of realization. All that can be demanded of any arrangement of drugs is that it shall be helpful to the student in acquiring knowledge, and to the physician in applying the knowledge acquired, and this is to be acknowledged of Wood's.

What we miss most of all in this book—and again the omissions must be deliberate and self-imposed—are definite therapeutic advice and differentiation. We do not mean to imply any obscurity or ambiguity, but rather a lack of specificity. The author has been somewhat general in his discussion of the uses of drugs, and rarely goes into detail. Nevertheless his recommendations are sound, and sufficient to give the student a comprehensive idea of the lines along which the different drugs may usefully and intelligently be applied.

On the whole, the book is to be heartily commended as a sincere and faithful presentation of the present status of pharmacology and therapeutics and their interrelations, and as laying a broad and firm foundation of therapeutic knowledge upon which the student can build according to his ability. We look forward to considerable popularity for the work, and to a demand for many subsequent editions.

S. S. C.

DUNN'S PURE FOOD AND DRUG LEGAL MANUAL. By Charles Wesley Dunn, A. M. of the New York Bar. Dunn's Pure Food and Drug Legal Manual and Corporation, 32 Liberty street, New York, N. Y., 2 Volumes Buckram. Price \$12.00 net.

The first of the above named volumes, embracing 2347 pages, is now at hand, The second volume is in course of preparation and will bring the number of pages to over four thousand in all.