

Part II develops the basic principles of the pharmacology of individual drugs, divided into the following sections: drugs acting on the skin and mucous membranes, drugs acting locally on the gastrointestinal tract, drugs acting on the central nervous system, drugs acting on the peripheral nervous system, drugs acting on the muscles, diuretics, metals and metalloids, and the sulfonamides. Ideal methods, which are all-embracing, for classifying the agents commonly used in therapeutics are difficult to attain. In broad outline, Davison has developed a convenient classification scheme. Unfortunately in the organization of subheadings the scheme frequently fails, creating unnecessary overlapping and misplacements. The chapter on antiseptics is a case in point. The classification is loose, the scheme being partially chemical and partially therapeutic, a scheme which has never been satisfactory. Further, the subsection on intestinal disinfection which appears in the chapter on gastrointestinal drugs, in the opinion of the reviewer, belongs more properly in the antiseptic chapter. There are many other chapters which show such poor organization. The section on anthelmintics has no organization whatever.

The chapters on autonomic pharmacology are especially well written. This is important, for since the discovery of the true nature of acetylcholine, a clear understanding of this phase of pharmacology is essential for the comprehension of many problems. The tracings and the charts in this section contribute much in the interest of clarity.

It is gratifying to see so many practical prescriptions scattered throughout the book. It is unfortunate that many of these prescriptions are misplaced. A prescription for methyl salicylate, to be used for counterirritation, is placed under the central action of the salicylates; in the section on counterirritation appears a prescription using alcohol to lessen sweating; in the section on antiseptics is found a prescription to tolu to be used as an expectorant, and there are many other examples of such misplacement.

Dr. Davison's book contains many errors of fact. Some of these are relatively trivial, but some are serious. For example, the advocacy of the use of metrazol in the treatment of morphine poisoning is positively dangerous in view of the long-known biphasic action of morphine. Since cocaine is a central stimulant, the use of camphor or strychnine in acute cocaine poisoning is also a highly questionable procedure.

This book can be recommended as a text for pharmacy students only if the instructor is fully conscious of the organizational defects and providing he is sufficiently well grounded in pharmacological fundamentals that he may point out its errors. For reference purposes, there are many books which are more suitable.

The press work in this book is very poor, there being many examples of broken type and crowded spacing. The rhetoric leaves much to be desired. For example, in referring to ipral sodium the author states that "its actions and uses are the same as those of calcium," although it is obvious that calcium ipral, and not calcium, is meant.—M. W. GREEN

*A Textbook of Dental Pharmacology, Materia Dentica and Pharmaco-Therapeutics*, by WILLIAM H. O. MCGHEE, M.D., D.D.S., F.A.C.D., and MELVIN W. GREEN, Ph.G., B.S., Ph.D. Second edition. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, Pa., 1941. xiv + 462 pp., 15 x 23 cm. Price, \$5.00.

The scope and quality of this text has been greatly increased in the present edition. Aside from the pharmacological and therapeutic considerations, the book contains brief but well-written chapters on pharmacognosy, pharmacy and prescription writing. Mastery of this portion of the book by the dental student would do much toward giving him the confidence and knowledge necessary for the proper employment of prescription writing in his profession.

The appendix is well organized, containing toxicological summaries, tabular information on solubilities, metrological equivalents and percentage solutions. Of particular interest to pharmacists as well as dentists is the dental formulary and prescription guide. The authors acknowledge a great many sources for these formulas and prescriptions and have conveniently presented them under seven headings, according to their use in dentistry.

The pharmacological text material has been extensively revised and modernized by emphasis on principles, inclusion of illustrative material, addition of chapters on sulfonamide drugs and vitamins. The brief, compact treatment in this text accorded to local and general anesthesia and autonomic drugs is excellent. Many of the fundamental and theoretical details have necessarily been omitted, but the omission has been rendered almost painless by the quality of the writing. Perhaps the most serious criticism in this respect is the extreme brevity with which normal physiological functions are treated before consideration of the effects produced by pharmacological modification of these functions. Considering the extent of the revision, very few organizational errors are apparent.

Representing as it does the combined experience of the authors as physician-dentist and pharmacist-pharmacologist, the book should be found exceedingly useful for study and reference by the student or practitioner of dentistry or pharmacy.—L. W. HAZLETON.