



Scheme III

plausible involvement of mescaloxylidic acid (IX) in the biogenesis of *N*-methylecgonine is being considered. In both of these cases, the decarboxylation of the acids IX and X is an essential step. Finally, we are also currently evaluating the biological activity of the reported new compounds.

- (1) G. J. Kapadia, G. S. Rao, E. Leete, M. B. E. Fayed, Y. N. Vaishnav, and H. M. Fales, *J. Amer. Chem. Soc.*, **92**, 6943(1970).
- (2) G. J. Kapadia and H. M. Fales, *Chem. Commun.*, **1968**, 1688.
- (3) G. J. Kapadia and H. M. Fales, *J. Pharm. Sci.*, **57**, 2017 (1968).

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BOOKS

REVIEWS

Dispensing of Medication, 7th ed. (Formerly Husa's Pharmaceutical Dispensing). Edited by E. W. MARTIN. Mack Publishing Co., 20th and Northampton Sts., Easton, PA 18042, 1971. 1223 pp. 18.5 × 26 cm. Price \$19.00.

The editor's intent is clearly stated in the Preface: "... this new edition has directed its emphasis toward the new concept of clinical pharmacy as it relates to every pharmacist whether he serves in a community or hospital practice, in governmental or private practice, in an extended care facility, a community health center, or some other environment where he works closely with both physicians and patients." Let us pause for a minute to consider the Promise of the Preface and ask ourselves what is to be expected from such a textbook. First of all, since clinical pharmacy is the goal, one would expect an in-depth exploration of this shadowy concept.

Furthermore, one might expect a detailed description of the various drug distribution systems (including automated dispensing) as they apply to community pharmacies, institutional pharmacies, and extended care facilities. Additionally, a how-to-do-it discussion of extemporaneous sterile technique (including i.v. additives) would appear to be appropriate. Patient medication profiles are here to stay, and thus one might expect at least a chapter on the various types, their utilization, and some evaluation of the various designs. The list of potential *in-depth* topics is long (*e.g.*, the various automated or computerized information systems, third-party payment, novel methods of receiving compensation) but let us end it here and crack open the book to see what it contains.

The Table of Contents is not encouraging. At first glance, it looks like a traditional dispensing textbook, a potpourri of the various pharmaceutical sciences (physical pharmacy, pharmaceuticals, pharmaceutical technology, *etc.*). But no, there are a few new chapters which did not appear in the previous edition: Hospital Phar-

macy, Drug Information Sources, Poison Control, Radiopharmaceuticals, Plastics and Medication (Plastics and Medication?). We're into it now, reading it page by page (my tongue runs dry on page 1053). . . it's over, we sit back to consider. What was that Promise of the Preface? "Emphasis toward the new concept of clinical practice"? Where? I must have missed it. And then (with few exceptions) it is painfully clear that I did not miss it, it is missing. Once again the pharmaceutical sciences with all their glorious graphs and equations have reigned supreme. Once again the student or the practitioner is carried into the *ad nauseum* details of the kinetics of solution, the trivia of comminution, the despair of the soft gelatin capsule machine, the whimper of the dying mesophilic anaerobic spore former. Indeed the majority of the chapters satisfy more the needs of the mediocre pharmaceutical scientist (or manufacturer) than the clinical pharmacist. Even the priorities appear to have gone awry. Patient medication profiles are mentioned briefly, drug distribution systems are given only a few pages, and how-to-do-it information is almost totally absent. A grand total of 99 pages is devoted to hospital and community pharmacy, whereas Plastics gets 64 pages and Incompatibilities gets 108.

Perhaps most distressing of all are some of the chapters devoted to dispensing and the functions of the pharmacist. One wonders where some of the authors have been for the last several years. For example, one author suggests that the pharmacist should enthusiastically endorse the medications dispensed so that even inefficacious medications will have a placebo effect. He ignores (or perhaps has not considered) the fact that in so doing the pharmacist is aiding and abetting shoddy prescribing habits and contributing to the nation's drug abuse problems—a role somewhat inconsistent with his or her obligations to the patient. The same author goes on to state that the "confidence of the physician in a specific course of treatment may greatly contribute to the therapeutic benefits, and the pharmacist must therefore be careful in his comments to the physician regarding such matters." Musn't tamper with that supreme confidence of the physician which enables him to prescribe lousy medication. Such statements as these in a textbook which promised to explore the new directions of clinical practice make one take pause. Another author states that "(information on drugs) is to be given to professional men and (is) never (to be) used for the purpose of 'counter prescribing' by the pharmacist, or to encourage self medication." In an age when the American public avidly awaits the next drug article in *Ladies' Home Journal*, and gluts itself on inefficacious T.V.-pushed OTC drugs the pharmacist is advised not to discuss drugs with his patients, or to use the information for "counter prescribing" (dirty, dirty word).

Where did you go, you "Promise of the Preface"?

In brief, *Dispensing of Medication* differs little from traditional dispensing texts which attempt to bite off too much. Its chapters range from excellent to trash. The vast majority of the topics (worth printing) should more suitably appear in other texts devoted to pharmaceuticals, physical pharmacy, or pharmaceutical technology.

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Search for New Drugs, Volume 6, Medicinal Research Series. Edited by ALAN A. RUBIN. Marcel Dekker, Inc., 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016, 1972. x + 452 pp. 16 × 24 cm. Price \$19.50.

After exhausting available means to achieve a specific goal, it is appropriate to recall certain cliches such as "back to the drawing board" or "step back and take another look." The contributors to this sixth volume of a series have "stepped back" and sketched a broad overview of certain familiar fields in which clinical progress has been slow. While there are leading references to original research articles as well as to reviews and summaries, the monograph is not intended to serve as a fully documented survey of research. As stated in the preface, "Its central theme defines areas of method-

ological and conceptual importance intended to assist investigators in their search for new drugs."

The first three chapters, which occupy half of the book, deal with the familiar fields: anti-inflammatory, antipeptic ulcer, and psychotropic drugs. In general, each of these chapters begins with a discussion of the clinical aspects of the disease and the available drug therapy. Then follows a cursory view of the methodology utilized in the evaluation of new drugs. The etiological factors in the disease are viewed as essential prerequisites to a rational approach to drug treatment and prevention. The chapter ends on a note of future needs and drug designs.

The next four chapters deal with areas that appear to be on the threshold of new drug development: drugs affecting β -adrenergic receptors, drugs affecting atherosclerosis, the interferon system, and antithrombotic and thrombolytic drugs. Here, past discoveries are related to current work and hopes of the future.

The last two chapters summarize current developments and offer suggestions of future potential in the relatively new fields of aging and memory.

The book should find an interested audience among medicinal chemists and pharmacologists.

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Legal Medicine Annual: 1971. Edited by CYRIL H. WECHT. Appleton-Century Crofts, 440 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016, 1971. xii + 480 pp. 17 × 24 cm.

The third volume in this series contains 22 chapters on relevant medical-legal subjects. Topics discussed in this volume include forensic pathology, medical malpractice, forensic psychiatry, medical-legal education and research, environmental controls, drug abuse, legal ramifications in the clinical practice of medicine, and criminalistics.

Staff Review ■

NOTICES

Einführung in die Verfahrenstechnik der Arzneifermung. By FRITZ GSTIRNER. Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft MBH, Stuttgart, Germany, 1972. xi + 425 pp. 16.5 × 24 cm. Price DM 78.—. (German)

Drogenkunde für Pharmazeutisch-Technische Assistenten und Apotheker-Praktikanten. By MANNFRIED PAHLOW. Deutscher Apotheker-Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 1971. 95 pp. 16.5 × 24 cm. Price DM 14.80. (German)

Histochemistry of Nervous Transmission. Volume 34, Progress in Brain Research Series. By E. D. ERANKO. American Elsevier Publishing Co., 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, NY 10017, 1971. xv + 525 pp. 18.5 × 26.0 cm. Price \$48.50.

The Cobalamins (A Glaxo Symposium). Edited by H. R. V. ARNSTEIN and R. J. WRIGHTON. Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, MD 21202, 1971. x + 208 pp. 14.5 × 23 cm. Price \$12.50.

Cellular Biology and Toxicity of Anesthetics. Edited by B. R. FINK. Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, MD 21202, 1972. xiii + 328 pp. 14.5 × 23.5 cm. Price \$20.50.

Simplified Circuit Analysis. By R. D. SACKS and H. B. MARK, JR. Marcel Dekker, Inc., 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016, 1972. 166 pp. 15 × 23 cm. Price \$6.50.

Anatomy of the Monocotyledons, Volume VI. Dioscoreales. By E. S. AYENSU. Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016, 1972. 182 pp. 15 × 23.7 cm. Price \$20.50.