

BOOK REVIEWS

E. MERCK'S JAHRESBERICHT UBER NEUERUNGEN AUF DEN GEBIETEN DER PHARMAKOTHERAPIE UND PHARMAZIE, 63rd Year, 1949, pp. 479 (including indexes). Verlag Chemie, G.M.B.H., Weinheim A.D. Bergstr. 1950.

E. Merck's Jahresbericht for 1949 deals with some 1,000 separate items, of which only a few can be mentioned in a brief review. A detailed account is given of the clinical action of para-amino salicylic acid in various forms of tuberculosis. Its use with streptomycin in tuberculous meningitis is described, and reference is made to combinations with sulphones such as Promin. 4-Acetamilobenzaldehyde thiosemicarbazone (Tb1; Conteben) is likewise dealt with in some detail, but the claims made for this medicament do not find unqualified support in this country. The employment of vitamin D₂ (Vigantol) in certain forms of *Lupus vulgaris* is advocated, though mention is made of the toxic symptoms which may follow its use. Brief reference is made to the use of Cortisone and adrenocorticotrophic hormone in arthritis. The claims of Meyer and Ragan for sodium gentisate are presented uncritically. The clinical uses of folic acid are given in balanced perspective, together with work which contraindicates its use for the neurological complications of pernicious anæmia. Brief reference is made to such folic acid antagonists as Diopterin and Teropterin in the treatment of malignant diseases. Vitamin B₁₂, too, is included, though a reference on page 420 is incorrect. The existence of other cobalt-containing clinically-active entities in liver is recorded.

Aerosporin, aureomycin, bacitracin, chloromycetin, evosin, polymixin and tyrothricin are mentioned in the section on antibiotics. Such antibacterial agents as Furacin, Dibromsalicyl, for which somewhat exaggerated claims are made, Gantrisin and Marfanil, as well as the standard sulphonamide drugs, are all included. References to tropical diseases are somewhat scattered:—antimony compounds and amidines for kala-azar; Antrycide for bovine trypanosomiasis; emetine and conessine for amoebiasis; Miracil D for schistosomiasis; Hetrazan for filariasis; mepacrine and Paludrine for malaria. The antihelminthic properties of Gammexane are mentioned. Egressin, a Merck oxyuricide, is described.

A brief review of the digitalis group of cardiac aglycones is followed by summaries of the pharmacological and clinical properties of digitoxin. The section on steroidal hormones mentions testosterone, oestrogen therapy during the menopause, and progesterone in mammary cancer. The value of synthetic oestrogens in prostatic carcinoma is discussed. Myanesin, penta- and decamethonium iodides, the barbiturates and amidone are all mentioned, as well as the coumarin anticoagulants, heparin, and the newer 2-phenylindan-1:3-dione. Other items include khellin, Flaxedil, Synkavit, Thiomerin, and the Tweens.

The book is well documented. The indexes, however, are not entirely satisfactory, as it is not always easy to find a medicament unless the exact German equivalent is known.