

# PHARMACOPOEIAS AND FORMULARIES

ADDENDUM 1960 TO THE BRITISH PHARMACOPOEIA 1958\*

REVIEWED BY MILES WEATHERALL

The 1960 Addendum to the 1958 edition of the British Pharmacopoeia does not contain any great surprises. There are forty-nine new monographs, but most of the substances introduced appear in more than one form, and some are new forms of existing drugs, so that only sixteen substances are introduced. These are bemegride, busulphan, chorhexidine, chlorothiazide, halothane, hydroxychloroquine, liothyronine, mercaptopurine, novobiocin, phytomenadione, poliomyelitis vaccine, potassium perchlorate, probenecid, pyridostigmine, tolbutamide and tripeleminamine. Monographs dealing with new preparations of substances already represented in the Pharmacopoeia cover sodium amylobarbitone (injection, capsules and tablets), corticotrophin (gelatin injection and zinc hydroxide injection), diphtheria and tetanus vaccine, hydrocortisone (hydrogen succinate, sodium succinate and sodium succinate injection), naphazoline hydrochloride, phenoxymethyl penicillin capsules, piperazine citrate, soluble compound codeine tablets and typhoid-paratyphoid A and B and cholera vaccine. Revisions particularly affect the monographs on B.C.G. vaccine and smallpox vaccine, but in all forty-two monographs are the subject of some sort of change.

The revisions are inevitably less interesting than the innovations, but the Pharmacopoeia Commission are discreetly silent about the reasons for their selection. The B.P. contains "descriptions of and standards for . . . medicines, preparations, materials and articles used in the practice of medicine, surgery, or midwifery" but the selection is far from comprehensive and the inclusion of a medicine in the B.P. is generally regarded as giving it the seal of official approval. It would be nice to see the criteria for selection explicitly stated. This is not to doubt but to applaud the wisdom of the Commission, who have a formidable problem in separating wheat from chaff. Whether the reasons could be stated compactly is perhaps another matter.

The new edition becomes official on March 1, 1961.

\* Pp. xxi + 83 (including index). Published for the General Medical Council by The Pharmaceutical Press, London. 30s. (Postage, U.K. 1s.; Overseas, 1s. 10d.)