

- Pilpel, N., Otuyemi, S. O., Kurup, T. R. R. (1978) Factors affecting the disintegration and dissolution of chloroquine phosphate/starch tablets. *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.* 30: 214-219
- Rama, C. S., Alemu, B., Nikolayev, A. S. (1983) Preliminary studies on bulla starch. *Ind. Drugs* 21: 74-75
- Simmonds, N. W. (1985) Musaceae. In: Hey Wood, V. H. (ed.) *Flowering Plants of the World*. Croom Helm Publishers Ltd, London & Sydney, p. 297
- Stanley-Wood, N. G., Shubair, M. S. (1979) The influence of binder concentration on the bond formation of pharmaceutical granules. *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.* 31: 429-433
- Willigen, A. H. A. (1964) Potato starch. In: Whistler, R. L. (ed.) *Methods in Carbohydrate Chemistry*. Vol. 4, Academic Press, New York and London, p. 10
- York, P., Pilpel, N. (1973) The tensile strength and compression behaviour of lactose, four fatty acids, and their mixtures in relation to tableting. *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.* 25 (Suppl.): 1P-11P
- Yu, H. C. M., Rubenstein, M. H., Jackson, I. M., Elsabbagh, H. M. (1988) Multiple compression and plasto-elastic behaviour of paracetamol and microcrystalline cellulose mixtures. *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.* 40: 669-673

J. Pharm. Pharmacol. 1993, 45: 320

© 1993 *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.*

Book Review

Plants in Cardiology

by A. Hollman

Published 1992 British Medical Journal, London

vii + 40 pages

ISBN 0 7279 0744 1 £5.95 UK, £7.50 overseas

The welcome renewal of interest in plants as sources of new drugs is sometimes understood only in terms of their providing new molecules which might eventually end up as the active compound in a medicine.

This small book, originally published as a series of articles on plant constituents of cardiological interest in the *British Heart Journal*, contains several examples of other ways in which natural products are useful in the wider sphere of drug discovery. Thus khellin from *Ammi visnaga* is an example of a drug molecule which has acted as a template for new coronary vasodilators such as nifedipine. Other compounds have found use as pharmacological tools such as aconitine from *Aconitum* species which induces atrial fibrillation. Toxicological interest is exemplified by such plants as species of *Senecio* and members of the Boraginaceae which contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids which cause hepatic veno-occlusive disease.

This book provides some interesting historical accounts of the development of drugs from plants but it is deficient in not having any chemical structures which would illustrate the chemical links

between natural products and drugs derived from them. The treatment is somewhat imbalanced, e.g. the cardiac glycoside-containing plants, the source of very important drugs, are only given one page, the same as the xanthine alkaloids, which are described as obsolete.

In spite of the title, some mention is made of other pharmacological effects and uses of compounds from the plants described. There are some important omissions in this respect, e.g. the use of theophylline as a bronchodilator. A substantial amount of the experimental work cited is several decades old and comparatively few modern references occur.

This book is useful to those interested in the background to the drugs mentioned but readers will have to look elsewhere for the fuller picture and especially the chemical relationships involved.

P. J. HOUGHTON
KING'S COLLEGE LONDON, UK

J. Pharm. Pharmacol. 1993, 45: 320

© 1993 *J. Pharm. Pharmacol.*

Book Review

Oxford Textbook of Clinical Pharmacology and Drug Therapy

Second edition

Edited by D. G. Grahame-Smith and J. K. Aronson

Published 1992 Oxford University Press, Oxford

XVII + 756 pages

ISBN 0 19 261675 7 £25.00 (paperback)

The first edition of this Oxford-based textbook of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics quickly established itself as a major text among undergraduate pharmacy, medical students and prescribing doctors, and has been reprinted four times since 1984. The subject has moved on, however, and important advances have been made in therapeutics and so this second edition is welcome. It is larger than the first but retains its basic format, and the authors have wisely enlisted the help of specialist colleagues to assist in writing the chapters on various areas of therapeutic practice.

An attractive feature of the book, particularly the earlier chapters on the basic science of clinical pharmacology and pharmacokinetics, is the use of seminal research papers to illustrate fundamental principles, to which the enquiring student may refer for further reading.

PAUL TURNER
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL, UK