substances." The introduction of this new term seems rather unfortunate. It might lead to some confusion, since the term "steroid," introduced only a few years ago, refers already to the derivatives of cyclopentenophenanthrene in general.

"The Chemistry of the Sterids" is not a textbook, but a handbook; it is a combination of a "Houben–Weyl," "Landolt–Börnstein" and "Beilstein" of steroid chemistry. The author has undertaken the laborious task of selecting from almost countless papers all the facts concerning the chemistry of steroids, and presenting them in a logical and readable form.

After an introductory chapter on the history of the chemistry of "sterids," the author deals with the various methods of structural research, steric considerations, the chemical properties of naturally occurring steroids and of carcinogens, and molecular compounds. Over 400 structural formulas, which have been brought together on 46 separate pages, serve to illustrate the text.

Then follows a compilation of the physical properties of steroids. This includes much invaluable and interesting information, such as, for instance, a complete list of the known absorption spectra of steroids and references to steroid crystallography.

The bulk of the book, 336 pages, is taken up by the "Beilstein" section, "a classified catalog of sterids and their derivatives recorded before January 1, 1937." Here over 3000 substances have been arranged according to a very ingenious system which should appeal to all investigators in this field. A very fine bibliography, covering over 60 pages, has been added.

Because it is essentially a handbook, this work cannot be recommended to serve as an introductory text to a student possessing only a scant knowledge of the complexities of steroid chemistry. However, it will be welcomed as an invaluable source of information by those investigators who have more than a passing interest for this field of research. The author deserves their gratitude for this compilation, which will save them many hours of search through an endless literature.

WERNER BERGMANN

Perspectives in Biochemistry. Thirty-one Essays Presented to Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins by Past and Present Members of his Laboratory. Edited by JOSEPH NEEDHAM and DAVID E. GREEN. Cambridge University Press: The Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., 1937. ix + 361 pp. Illustrated. 14.5 × 22.5 cm. Price, $4.75.

Scientific writing for the most part finds its way into journals whose reputations depend increasingly upon the size of their circulation and speed of publication. The exigencies of price curtail space and individual literary style is perforce sacrificed to a crisp staccato manner, highly satisfactory to enable large numbers of people rapidly to digest the contents of an article. Excellent from this point of view, there is little room for historical perspective, for philosophical rumination, or for guarded speculation. Although journals given over to reviews take care of the first need, rumination often becomes a private feast, and speculation is left for those who, having eschewed science for journalism, can assure the eager and expectant public precisely what kind of a world this will be fifty years hence.

Among the amenities left to men of science is the pleasant habit of dedicating volumes to those they revere, especially their old teachers. But the Festschrift, or jubilee volume, has tended, with the rest of scientific writing, to be a collection of papers written by colleagues or students in the same style, and often in the same journals to which they normally contribute. The book which we are reviewing is not in this tradition. It is not a collection of reprints from scientific journals. It is a series of essays in which each author has taken time "to speculate a little on the likely paths of future thought and discovery."

The value of this volume depends upon the backgrounds and scientific insight of the contributors. All have at one time or other been students of, or associated with, Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins. Of the thirty-one essayists many have international reputations gained from important experimental studies. Writing in this book to honor Sir Frederick they are in festive mood. Instead of dedicating to their great teacher their last paper they have sent him their most far reaching thoughts regarding the significance of their work. The result is arresting. It is good to know what R. A. Peters thinks of "Proteins and Cell-Organization." J. D. Bernal contributes "A Speculation on Muscle." Szent-Györgyi writes on "Oxidation and Fermentation," and N. K. Adam on "Molecular Forces, Orientation and Surface Films." Sir Edward Mellanby writes on "Toxamins in Food," and A. J. Clark on "Drugs and Mankind." The remainder of the thirty-one essays are no less varied in subject matter or treatment. Although this would be a break with the practice of exempting those honored from contributions, one cannot help wishing that this very catholic volume also contained an essay by Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins on "Perspectives in Biochemistry."

EDWIN J. COHN

The Chemistry and Technology of Rubber Latex. By C. FALCONER FLINT, Ph.D., D.I.C., A.I.C., A.R.C.S., B. Sc., Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd. Foreword by Lt. Colonel B. J. EATON. D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 250 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y., 1938. xx + 715 pp. Illustrated. 16 × 24 cm. Price, $14.00.

There are few people who by actual training are so well equipped to write a book on the chemistry and technology of rubber latex as is Dr. C. Falconer Flint. For many years a staff member of the Rubber Research Institute, of Malaya and now in charge of latex research and development with the Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., he combines personal experience of the raw material and its technical application. Although in the preface the author states that he used G. Génin's book "Chimie et Technologie du Latex de Caoutchouc" as a framework, he has not only brought this compilation up to date but has added freely to it, which justifies the reviewer to consider Flint's book as the outstanding contribution to the science and technology of rubber latex which has been written in English.

The first parts of the book present a short historical survey of the development of rubber plantations and earlier work on latex research. Then follows a discussion of the