

and provides in loose leaf form revised and supplementary material for five chapters. About one-third of the material is for the inorganic chapters IX and X, compounds  $R_x(MX_m)_y$  and the hydrates and ammoniates. The remaining two-thirds greatly expands the organic portion, chapters XIII, XIV, XV, aliphatic compounds, derivatives of benzene and alicyclic and heterocyclic compounds, respectively. Literature coverage is through 1954, with some 1955 references. The illustrations in the entire series are exceptionally clearly drawn, which is quite an accomplishment for many of the complex structures described in the present supplement. There is evidence throughout, of course, of Dr. Wyckoff's critical judgment as to the reliability of the structures discussed.

Obviously, purchasers of the previous sections and supplements of this work will want this addition to bring their set up to date. Indeed, the earlier volumes would lose some of their usefulness if they were not "revised" by the replacement sheets of this new supplement. Those interested in organic structures will find the large amount of new material especially useful. Finally, it should be emphasized again that the entire series is an essential reference work for all (libraries, laboratories, and individuals) who must keep up with structural information in the literature.

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**Biochemie der Hormone.** By Prof. Dr. phil. THEODOR BERSIN, St. Gallen (Schweiz). Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Geest and Portig K.-G., Sternwartestrasse 8, Leipzig C 1, Germany. 1959. viii + 342 pp. 16 × 23.5 cm. Price, DM 27.—.

In this book, Th. Bersin attempts to discuss briefly the present status of our knowledge of hormones. He considers

their biochemistry, mechanism of action, importance in normal and pathological physiology as well as in a number of other fields. Although he addresses himself foremost to the biochemist, he hopes to bring material of interest also to the biologist and others, not primarily concerned with biochemical considerations.

The text consists mainly of a compilation of facts taken from the literature without critical evaluation, and cited in very loose context. In many instances fundamental research by leading authorities is mentioned side by side with unproven speculations of minor contributors to the field. The choice of references in general is poor, and does not seem to follow any understandable pattern. Quite frequently the names of outstanding research workers are mentioned and their contributions are praised, but references to their work are not given. Instead, the author chose to cite a review article containing the reference of the origin work but appearing more than ten years later.

In a number of chapters the author loses himself in describing superficially principles of elementary physiology and biochemistry, which can be found in any college textbook, and are only loosely related to the hormonal problem under discussion. This holds especially true for the chapters dealing with the manufacture of hormones, testing of activity and clinical evaluation. The illustrations are so primitive and highly schematic that their informative value seems questionable to this reviewer.

For the beginner who wishes to inform himself in the field of hormones in a general way, this book is confusing, to the more advanced worker in adjacent fields looking for stimulating discussions and pertinent references leading to fundamental papers, it is disappointing.

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