Medicine," in which the drugs acting on the eye, neuromuscular system, alimentary tract, uterus, and skin are considered, followed by a section on "Toxic Substances of Industrial and Homely Origin," and one on "Chemotherapy." The last part consists of a chapter devoted to toxicology. This arrangement has resulted, unfortunately, in a rather disjointed presentation, without the logical sequence so desirable in a textbook.

The material presented is up to date and complete; the typography is excellent. The references appended to each chapter are also well chosen. The book is written in a colloquial style which, although making for a pleasant presentation, results in unnecessary verbosity and is ill-suited for a text. The indiscriminate use of trade names is undesirable and confusing.

The book contains some errors which, although perhaps minor, are regrettable in a textbook and will be misleading to the reader. For example, in Chapter 19, one finds the molecular weight of sodium chloride given as 36.5 (p. 342); the view that "the 'cured patient' who leaves the hospital after serious dehydration is often a reduced animal as regards his total body weight" (p. 246). Although it will be apparent to the initiated that, in the instances cited, the author meant the atomic weight of chlorine (which is actually 35.5), and that the patient was edematous (rather than dehydrated), these apparently minor errors may be a source of confusion to the potential reader.

A more serious criticism is the lack of selectivity in the material chosen for presentation. For example, on page 1195, a paragraph is devoted to the treatment of opium poisoning by permanganate, an antidote of questionable virtue, and other symptomatic measures, although the use of allyl-*nor* morphine, the specific remedy, is also mentioned with no indication that the use of this drug is by far the most effective antidote. Likewise, on page 1191, although the use of the artificial kidney is mentioned, there is no indication that repair of extracellular fluid volume promptly is of greatest importance and may prevent the onset of anuria, and that conservative measures usually suffice in the management of such patients.

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Progress in Organic Chemistry, Vol. 1. J. W. Cook, Ed. New York: Academic Press; London: Butterworths, 1952. 287 pp. $7.80.

This volume represents the British counterpart of Zechmeister's *Progress in the Chemistry of Organic Natural Products.* For the American reader it has the advantage of being entirely in English, even though one of the contributors, H. H. Brockmann, is at Göttingen. This first volume will be followed, it is hoped, by others which will enable the specialist in the ever-widening field of organic chemistry to obtain a glimpse of what is happening outside the area of his own immediate interest.

The topics covered are of a diverse nature and include structures of certain alkaloids, and of substances isolated from the heartwoods of conifers, photodynamically active pigments—i.e., substances toxic to organisms in the presence but not in the absence of light—chemicals from petroleum, chemistry of acetylene derivatives, drugs inhibiting symptomatic stimulators, free radicals in organic reactions, and the hydrolysis of starch.

The material is well covered and clearly presented; any adverse criticisms occurring to this reviewer are limited to details. On page 95 the yield stated for the oxidation of butane and propane must, if true, be rapidly driving Celanese Corporation into bankruptcy. On page 197 the boiling point of propylene oxide is given as 84° C; it should be 35°. On page 130 it is stated that the sole product of the condensation of formaldehyde and nitromethane is trimethylolnitromethane; actually 2-nitroethanol is made by this reaction and is an important intermediate in the synthesis of higher carbohydrates from lower ones. On page 70 the statement is made that "neither analysis nor degradation experiments" can decide between two possible formulas for hypericin which are, respectively, $C_{30}H_{18}O_8$ and $C_{30}H_{16}O_8$. This is a difference of 12.3 per cent in hydrogen content and should be well within the capabilities of modern analysis.

This volume constitutes a valuable addition to the branch of organic chemistry literature which systematizes, organizes, and portrays to the busy chemist recent advances that he has not had time to assimilate from the original literature.

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Scientific Book Register

Problems of Life: An Evaluation of Modern Biological Thought. Trans. from *Das Biologische Weltbild.* Ludwig von Bertalanffy. New York: Wiley; London: Watts, 1952. 216 pp. $4.00.

Physical Diagnosis. Harry Walker. St. Louis: Mosby, 1952. 461 pp. $8.00.

Science and Humanism: Physics in Our Time. Erwin Schrödinger. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1951. 68 pp. $1.75.

Ancient Sparta: A Re-examination of the Evidence. Tout Memorial Publication Fund. K. M. T. Chrimes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1952. 527 pp. and plates. $8.75.

The Structure of Society. Marion J. Levy, Jr. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1952. 584 pp. $5.00.

Culdoscopy: A New Technic in Gynecologic and Obstetric Diagnosis. Albert Decker. Philadelphia–London: Saunders, 1952. 148 pp. Illus. $3.50.

The Development of Economic Thought: Great Economists in Perspective. Henry William Spiegel, Ed. New York: Wiley; London: Chapman & Hall, 1952. 811 pp. $6.50.