

*Native Orchids of North America*. Donovan Stewart Correll. Waltham, Mass.: Chronica Botanica; New York: Stechert-Hafner, 1950. 399 pp. \$7.50.

This is a superbly illustrated manual of all orchid species of North America, north of Mexico. Based largely on the Orchid Herbarium of the Botanical Museum of Harvard and on the extensive field work of the author, the treatment of some 150 species of orchids in 46 genera is complete and satisfying. The 146 well-reproduced plates illustrating the book are mostly the work of Blanche Ames and Gordon W. Dillon, two of the outstanding botanical artists of our times. The account of each species includes a brief synonymy, a complete botanical description, a summary of geographical distribution, often a statement of habitat preferences, and a paragraph or two of cultural notes. The latter were contributed by Edgar T. Wherry, of the University of Pennsylvania, and John V. Watkins, of the University of Florida.

The taxonomic treatment on the whole is conservative, although there are a few surprising omissions. Thus *Spiranthes cernua* var. *ochroleuca* (Rydb.) Ames is dismissed on the grounds that a compound microscope is needed to determine the diagnostic character! *Habenaria media* (Rydb.) Niles is missing altogether, although this may be an unintentional oversight. Perhaps the most questionable treatment is the combination of *Cypripedium pubescens* Willd. and *C. parviflorum* Salisb. into a single variety of the Eurasian *C. calceolus* L., from which they are said to differ by a polymorphic tendency.

Despite these few shortcomings, the book will no doubt stand for years as the authoritative reference work on our native species of this interesting family.

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*Medicinal Chemistry*, Vol. I. C. M. Suter, Ed. New York: Wiley; London: Chapman & Hall, 1951. 473 pp. \$12.00.

*Medicinal Chemistry*, Vol. I. Alfred Burger. New York-London: Interscience, 1951. 577 pp. \$10.00.

Both these books are recommended to the chemist and pharmacologist concerned with the synthesis and evaluation of new compounds. The volume edited by Suter is the first of a series prepared under the auspices of the Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the American Chemical Society. This consists of 6 separate reviews written by 7 investigators of reputation: G. W. Anderson, "Antithyroid Compounds;" Robert R. Burtner, "Antispasmodics, Derivatives of Carboxylic Acids;" C. J. Cavallito, "Antibiotics from Plants;" Thomas P. Carney, "Benzoates and Substituted Benzoates as Local Anesthetics;" and finally, Edwin J. Fellows and Glenn E. Ulyot contributed the discussion of "Aralkylamines" under "Analgesics;" John Lee prepared the accompanying material on "Partial Structures, Related."

Each of these reviews is actually a complete mono-

graph in itself. References are made to all compounds that have been investigated for a particular type of pharmacological activity. For the most part, data on the compounds are presented in tabular form and according to chemical groups. The methods of synthesis and testing are adequately presented for a volume of this sort. Each reviewer also includes a discussion of the relationship between chemical structure and pharmacological activity. This volume should be an excellent source book for those interested in these specific fields—particularly since numerous references are included to groups of compounds in the patent literature alleged to have specific pharmacological activity for which there are no published supporting data.

Although the various sections in the volume by Burger bear classical textbook headings, the work is designed primarily for the more advanced student and is highly recommended as a work that will familiarize him with current trends and thoughts in pharmacological research. Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, Volume II of this work was not available. However, on the basis of the style of writing and organization of the material in Volume I, the complete set promises to be a valuable addition to the personal library of biochemists and pharmacologists. The chapters on the chemical and physical properties in relation to biological activity are especially worthy of mention. Those on the adrenergic drugs, blocking agents, and parasympathetic stimulants cover the most recent developments in fields now in an unusual state of flux.

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*The Neuroses: Diagnosis and Management of Functional Disorders and Minor Psychoses*. Walter C. Alvarez. Philadelphia-London: Saunders, 1951. 667 pp. \$10.00.

Dr. Alvarez writes in his usual intriguing, easy-to-read style, enlivened with case material garnered from 45 years of practice. His purpose is commendable—to arouse the interest of physicians in recognizing and properly treating the enormous number of patients who seek help for "functional" illness. Twenty-nine chapters cover a general orientation to the problem of neurosis, diagnosis, causes of neuroses and psychoses, types of personality and several syndromes, the psychosomatic features of the several specialties, and treatment. The content of these chapters is of variable merit. The exhortation to listen sympathetically to the life problems as well as physical symptoms of the neurotic patient is wisely repeated in many ways. The need for careful study of both somatic and psychic factors is justly stressed. Diagnosis, however, is made predominantly by superficial observation, unrelated to principles of modern dynamic psychiatry.

In discussing causes of neurosis, greatest emphasis seems to be placed on "poor nervous inheritance," an