

BOOK - REVIEW

Selected Topics in Experimental Pharmacology by U.K. Sheth, N.K. Dadkar and Usha G. Kamat, Kothari Book Depot, 1972, 227 pages, Rs. 40/-.

The Pharmacology Department of Seth G.S. Medical College, Parel, Bombay was built up since midtwenties by Prof. A.S. Paranjape who as a student of Gottlieb and Cushny was strongly influenced by the profound German scholarship and classic pharmacodynamic approach. In early fifties Dr. Roger A. Lewis, the father of Indian Clinical Pharmacology, spent three intensive years in this Department as the W.H.O. Professor. It is equally creditable to all that, after inheriting these two outstanding traditions, Prof. Sheth and his students have continued to develop them in the enlightened and progressive atmosphere of Seth G.S. Medical College. The present book on experimental techniques is a happy outcome of this history.

The printing of this book is good, pictures and photographs clear and printer's mistakes very few; no small achievements in the country. Its contents are substantial and very useful. The book would certainly pass as the most extensive and so far the most successful of all such attempts by Indian pharmacologists and physiologists. Therefore, it will prove euqually useful to the teachers, postgraduates and undergraduates.

It is with humility and hope that the reviewer wishes to discuss the shortcomings of such a deserving endeavour.

The difficulties which Indian text-book authors face are indeed numerous and overwhelming. Efficient stenotypists, competent artists, effective photographers, co-operating press, critical reviewers and a generally intellectual atmosphere are not readily available to most of the Indian authors and yet they have to compete with their best-equipped western counter-parts.

To express briefly, systematically and elegantly in a foreign language proves a problem by itself. The syntax and composition stand as constant obstacles. Further, today's English-speaking Indians have evolved four dialects of English. Depending on age, mother-tongue, place of high-schooling and source of foreign aid they use one of the following — Indian English (which has about 15 sub-species: one in each linguistic province), Anglo-Indian English, Indo-American English and Indo-Anglo-American English. This fact only adds to the authors' misery. The linguistic shortcomings in this book should be looked into, in the next edition, with the help of a language expert.

The arrangement, sequence and composition of different topics can be greatly improved with the help of critical and sympathetic referees. Attempt of classifying and subclassifying the chapters has created some confusion. Perhaps the pattern followed by Burn in his classical *Practical Pharmacology* (Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, 1952) would be more

helpful. A little more of history and theory of each technique should be given to make it more interesting and useful. The limitations as also the common causes of failure should be given for each technique. The appendix on anesthetics needs addition and rewriting.

Some more attention may be paid to the local factors, for example, more manpower exists for help in Indian laboratories than in many foreign ones. Also in Indian high schools we are taught *traishik* (त्रैशिक), *pancharashik* (पंचराशिक) and *beharashik* (बहुराशिक) of direct and inverse proportionality (सम and व्यस्त). Therefore, a typical Indian student is usually burdened and often confused by the way formulae are derived and remembered by the western scientists. A chapter on elementary electronics in experimental pharmacology and physiology would prove of a timely help to the Indian postgraduates and should be added in the next edition.

In spite of the limitations many of which obviously remain beyond the Indian authors' control, the book remains of great use to the teachers and students of physiology and pharmacology. The authors fully deserve active support for this edition and all good wishes for the next one.

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NEWS**FIFTH ALL INDIA CONVENTION OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

The Fifth All India Convention of Clinical Psychologists will be held on 4-6 November, 1974 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi under the auspices of the Delhi Association of Clinical Psychologists. Full particulars of the Convention can be had from: Surya Gupta, Organizing Secretary, The Fifth All India Convention of Clinical Psychologists, Department of Neurology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi-110016.

7TH EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF CARDIOLOGY

The 7th European Congress of Cardiology will be held on June 20-25, 1976 at Congress Centre RAI, Amsterdam under the auspices of the Netherlands Society of Cardiology. Full particulars of the Convention can be had from the Secretariat: C/o Holland Organizing Centre, 16, Lange Voorhout, The Hague, The Netherlands.

5TH CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

The 5th Congress of the European Society of Ophthalmology will be held on April 5-9, 1976 at Hamburg, German Federal Republic under the auspices of The German Society of Ophthalmology and the Professional Association of German Ophthalmologists. Full particulars of the convention can be had from the Secretariat: C/o Holland Organizing Centre, 16, Lange Voorhout, The Hague, The Netherlands.