

of interest to students of mammalian natural history. It is unfortunate that the reproduction of the numerous photographs in some cases leaves much to be desired.

One wonders, however, especially these days of paper shortage, whether it is necessary to record observations in such very great detail. The chapter on mannerisms, for example, comprising forty-two pages, devotes six pages to attitude, nearly three pages to locomotion, and three to scratching, with a tabular summary of the parts of the body scratched and the manner in which it is performed. This is followed by five pages on wariness, seven pages on response to trapping, etc., the chapter concluding with nearly eight pages on sanitation. This is a far cry from the original observations on the animal in Captain Beechey's account of the visit of H.M.S. *Blossom* to Monterey in 1826 (vol. 2, p. 80) that "The fields are burrowed also by the arditillo, a species of *sciurus*, rather a pretty animal, said to be good to eat". Its edibility is not mentioned in the present volume.

E. HINDLE

8/6

## PENICILLIN AND ITS CLINICAL USES

### Penicillin

Its Practical Application. Under the general editorship of Prof. Sir Alexander Fleming. Pp. xi + 380. (London: Butterworth and Co. (Publishers), Ltd., 1946.) 30s. net.

THIS is a general guide to the use of penicillin and is intended mainly for students, general practitioners and junior hospital medical officers. In order that every application may best be demonstrated, Sir Alexander Fleming has delegated to an imposing selection of experts the task of representing the specialized aspects of penicillin therapy. The book is, in effect, a collection of articles, and the authors, each in an understandable desire to present a complete picture, have overlapped considerably; and although not contradicting each other, there is an occasional discrepancy in dosage prescribed for the same condition by different people.

There are two sections; the first is an introduction with articles by Sir Alexander Fleming on the history and development of penicillin and on bacteriological control of therapy, and by others on chemistry and manufacture, pharmacy, pharmacology and methods of administration; the second section is purely clinical.

The clinical section contains twenty-one articles, some excellent, all covering adequately the chosen subjects, which range from war wounds through infective processes in every organ and viscus to animal diseases. A most useful article for its guide to dosage is that on generalized infections by Mr. R. Vaughan Hudson. There is a tendency by some of the other writers to give, in the reviewer's opinion, too small doses.

Sir Alexander Fleming says in his introduction: "It is almost impossible to give an overdose in the ordinary sense of the word. It is certainly possible to give much more than is necessary but in days of plenty that will not be a serious crime". The days of plenty have arrived; but their advent has escaped the notice of some. Readers should keep Sir Alexander's words in mind, follow the author using the largest doses (when a disease is covered in more than one article), and, when in doubt, multiply by

five. The insistence on adequate dosage is reinforced by recent observations on the variations in character and constitution of commercial penicillin in the United States (*Lancet*, 2; 387; 1946), although this problem does not yet appear to have affected British products.

There is, throughout the book, a commendable reticence on the scope of penicillin therapy, and it is to be hoped that the medical men for whom the book was planned will benefit by this. Penicillin, like other remedies, has its limitations, and its thoughtless use where it cannot possibly be of value leads only to disrepute.

There is a number of minor errors in the text and index, and there is often produced an impression of haste in preparation. The book on the whole fulfils its purpose admirably, and there are no omissions in the enormous field of application. Subsequent editions would be vastly improved by reducing, or better removing, the many instances of overlapping.

J. MARSHALL

5/6

## ORNAMENTAL TREES, SHRUBS AND VINES

Trees, Shrubs and Vines for the North-eastern United States

By George Graves. Pp. xi + 267. (New York, London and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1945.) 15s. net.

THIS little handbook is intended for the guidance of those who are concerned with private gardens or roadside planting in the North-eastern United States; but since the plants described in it are, almost without exception, suitable for British gardens, it deserves the notice of horticulturists in Britain and elsewhere.

The main body of the text consists of an alphabetical arrangement of genera under which some seven hundred species, varieties and garden forms are discussed. The descriptions are so framed as to give an idea of the garden value of each plant rather than to serve as an aid to identification. Many suggestions for culture and propagation are included, measures for the control of pests and diseases are suggested, and the author has not hesitated to indicate specific susceptibility to injury by frost or wind.

The technical names of plants are those found in the second edition of Rehder's "Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs", and in cases of recent change both old and new names are given.

Selection from the seven or eight thousand woody plants available for planting in the area concerned can have been no light task, and there are few items the inclusion of which one could reasonably question other than *x Mahoberberis Neubertii*, which the author himself frankly disavows, and *Solanum dulcamara*. On the other hand, there are interesting references to plants infrequently seen in Great Britain, such as the fastigate forms of *Acer rubrum*, *A. platanoides* and *A. saccharum*.

Illustrations showing both habit and details of flowers and fruits are numerous and good; and chapters giving advice on the selection and purchase of nursery plants and the pruning required for their satisfactory development add interest and value to the book.

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