

The British Pharmaceutical Codex, 1949

(Published by direction of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.) Pp. xxv+1562. (London: Pharmaceutical Press, 1949.) 63s.

THE new "British Pharmaceutical Codex" which was published on October 17, thirteen months after the new "British Pharmacopœia", is the fifth of the series which started in 1907. The Codex was originally based on a simple "Formulary of Unofficial Remedies" which had been issued under the ægis of the British Pharmaceutical Conference since 1886. It has grown in importance and now includes standard tests for the purity of drugs which are not included in the "British Pharmacopœia", either because they are not yet sufficiently established, or because they have been ejected. It also includes all the drugs in the Pharmacopœia with a brief summary of their properties and a large number of prescriptions.

The Codex is a more human document than the Pharmacopœia, which makes poor reading matter. The section in each monograph devoted to actions and uses has always been interesting; in the new Codex it is also reliable and up to date. Much work must have gone into the revision of these articles, which provide a valuable guide to modern therapeutics.

Among the hundreds of new preparations now included for the first time in the Codex are folic acid dimercaprol (*BAL*), lachesine, maphenide, proguanil ('Paludrine') and various preparations of human blood, such as whole blood, plasma and serum (liquid and dried), fibrinogen, fibrin foam and thrombin. About 350 preparations have been deleted, but a brief summary of their properties is given in an appendix. A list of proprietary names for official drugs is printed on a separate card. The external appearance of the book is similar to that of its immediate predecessor, but the type and layout have been improved, and although there are more words, there are fewer pages. The Codex Revision Committee is to be congratulated on its work which has been efficiently and promptly done. The Codex will maintain its position as an indispensable book of reference for anyone who is interested in the practical use of drugs in therapeutics. J. H. G.

Faraday's Encyclopedia of Hydrocarbon Compounds

Compiled by Dr. Joseph Escott Faraday. Vol. 5: $C_{10}H_{8-14}$, covering the Literature up to Jan. 1, 1947. Pp. xxi+312. 1948. £5 10s. Vol. 6: $C_{10}H_{16}$, up to Jan. 1, 1947. Pp. 449. 1948. n.p. Vol. 2: C_6 and C_7 . Second Replacement-Addition issue, up to Jan. 1, 1948. Pp. 232. 1949. 37s. 6d. Vol. 3: C_8 . First Replacement-Addition issue, up to Jan. 1, 1948. Pp. 196. 1949. 32s. 6d. Vol. 7: $C_{10}H_{18-22}$, up to Jan. 1, 1948. Pp. 427. 1949. £5 10s. Vol. 8: $C_{11}H_{8-16}$, up to Jan. 1, 1949. Pp. 271. 1949. 75s. (Manchester: Chemindex, Ltd.)

DURING the past year and a half, Dr. J. E. Faraday has continued his great task of indexing the hydrocarbons, the volumes dealing with $C_{10}-C_{22}$ and $C_{11}H_{8-16}$ now having appeared. All these volumes remain virtually unchanged in plan and contain all literature references to about a year before the date of publication. Replacement-addition volumes have also appeared for C_6 , C_7 and C_8 , covering the literature up to the beginning of 1948.

An important modification for future volumes is mentioned in the foreword to the volume on $C_{11}H_{8-16}$:

it is announced that in order to save space and expedite future publications, information contained in Beilstein's "Organische Chemie" and Egloff's "Physical Constants of Hydrocarbons" will not be given except as page references to these works. This seems to be a good idea, as almost all users of the encyclopædia will have easy access to these. It is also stated that as Dr. Malcolm Dyson intends to modify his system of ciphering, all ciphers hitherto given will be obsolete, and for the same reason Dyson ciphers will no longer be given until the situation is clarified. The reviewer is not aware of the changes envisaged by Dr. Dyson or of the no doubt excellent reasons which have impelled him to make them, but it is going to be troublesome if such changes are of frequent occurrence in the future.

'Analar' Standards for Laboratory Chemicals

Fourth edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. xviii+302. (London: British Drug Houses, Ltd., and Hopkin and Williams, Ltd., 1949.) n.p.

THIS new edition of a well-known collection of standards will be generally welcomed. Fifty-eight new items have been added, mainly organic reagents used either in inorganic analysis or in preparing derivatives of organic substances for their identification.

The adoption of improved methods and newer techniques has given increased precision in determining certain impurities. Polarographic methods, electrolytic deposition of certain metals and the Karl Fischer determination of water in liquids may be mentioned. The additional accuracy so attained is valuable: in a few instances it has shown that some previous limits prescribed were over-optimistic.

This book will continue to be a most useful laboratory handbook.

Severn Stream

By Brian Waters. Pp. 206+16 plates. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1948.) 15s. net.

THIS is the sequel to Mr. Brian Waters's excellent and highly successful "Severn Tide". It deals with the upper waters of the longest river in Great Britain, from the source on Plynlimmon to Tewkesbury. This is magnificent country for the author, who is a true countryman with wide interests in topography and natural history; a man, moreover, with an inquiring mind and a great interest in his fellow men, their works and ways. Mr. Waters has made the most of his opportunity, and has written another volume of topographical writing at its best—accurate, urbane, artistic, earthy.

The reviewer was born hard by Plynlimmon, and returns to that magnetic mountain as often as he possibly can. He has not read a more perfect description of the source of Severn than that in this book, accurate even down to the detail of the buzzard's shadow magnified on the hillside, but alive with a feeling for place that is all too rare nowadays. It is so all the way down the stream. History and natural history, archaeology and industry, all have their place, and no good story is missed. That would be equally true of many a topographical work of the present day. It is the warm personality of the author, and a mastery of English prose, that lifts this book, as it lifted its predecessor, away above its fellows. The sixteen photographs are excellent and well chosen, and there is a good index. Unfortunately, and incomprehensibly, there is no map. If ever a book needed a good map, it is this.