

The three-volume set is designed for students and general practitioners. To be a suitable textbook, it might have to undergo considerable editing. Its cost and length, (1,767 pages, including some 231 pages of bibliography) seem in part to be the result of a literary verbosity. It seems unnecessary to point out, even to the medical student, that women are less prone to baldness than men and do not ordinarily grow beards (Vol. I, p. 163; Vol. II, p. 350; Vol. III, p. 37), or to illustrate the fat and the thin woman. Although there is much to be said for the historical approach, too much space is taken up with accounts of methods and ideas which are now abandoned. There are also quite a number of statements of fact, such as that Stein-Leventhal ovaries are congenital or that radiation of the spleen is useful in uterine hemorrhage, which are, at best, open to question.

The organizational plan of the three volumes is good, in spite of some repetition in the text. The references, especially to the German literature during the earlier part of this century, are very extensive. Rather than a text, it is a useful reference work and it represents a significant addition to the gynecological literature.

JOHN MCLEAN MORRIS

**TOPLEY AND WILSON'S PRINCIPLES OF BACTERIOLOGY AND IMMUNITY.** 4th ed., revised by G. S. Wilson and A. A. Miles. Baltimore, The Williams and Wilkins Co., 1955. viii, 2,332, xlviii pp. \$24.50—the set of 2 volumes.

Since it first appeared in 1929, "Topley and Wilson" has been constantly at the side of very professor of medical bacteriology who was preparing a lecture and of many a bacteriologist doing actual work. Its authoritative and comprehensive coverage and readable style have long set it apart from even the best of other texts in its fields. At intervals, revisions have been made to keep pace with the active progress of medical research.

In this, the first revision since 1946, the surviving author has again had the collaboration of Dr. A. A. Miles, Director of the Lister Institute, London. Their philosophy may be expressed by quoting from the preface to this edition:

"... although the book was originally intended for the general student of medicine and biology, its character has gradually changed, till now this claim can no longer be justified. The great expansion of knowledge during the last twenty-five years has forced us to deal more and more with the bacteriology of infection in man and animals, and to treat this at increasingly greater length . . . much of interest to the non-medical bacteriologist has had to be omitted and a mass of detail has had to be included so as to render parts of the text frankly unsuited for the undergraduate medical student. We hope it will prove of correspondingly greater value to the post-graduate student of human and veterinary medicine, to the teacher of bacteriology and immunity and to the research worker."

Although the text is some 277 pages longer than that of the third edition, the new matter added is even more extensive. This appears to have been achieved, in part, by summarizing less important material formerly treated

at length and, in part, by judicious pruning of the fine leisurely sentences composed at a time when type costs were not so high. A detailed comparison of several representative chapters with those of the third edition arouses admiration for the skill—and even devotion—with which this revision has been made. There is not a sentence of added material which is not in good context, or which has the aroma of the scissors and paste-pot school of revision. Many of the sections, especially those dealing with metabolism, phage, and chemotherapy have been completely rewritten, as the newer research provided a fresh approach to the presentation. As might be expected, the more settled areas, such as descriptions of organisms, have merely been brought up to date.

Inevitably in a work of this magnitude minor faults can be found. The space devoted to the general properties of viruses still seems inadequate, in comparison with that devoted to some less important topics. The discussion on photometric assay methodology has been shortened (to the point of omitting the senior author's own work!) although laboratory applications are ever increasing. The discussion on probit assay (p. 1133) would deserve more extended treatment—or at least a modern reference, such as to Finney's book—and the graph (Fig. 242) illustrating it is inaccurate if employing a linear ordinate. The references—there are often several hundred per chapter—are a most valuable feature of the book. They stress, rightly, early contributions and original sources. Nevertheless, the reader might well appreciate knowing of certain recent monographs, symposia, and review articles which provide useful second-level introductions to special topics. Examples of this are Waksman's monograph on actinomycetes, van Heyningen's on toxins, and the recent New York Academy of Sciences Symposium on hyaluronic acid systems.

Nevertheless, we are deeply grateful to the authors for this fine revision of a classic. It represents a substantial addition to what we have had available.

HENRY P. TREFFERS

**ANDROGENS: BIOCHEMISTRY, PHYSIOLOGY AND CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE.**  
By Ralph I. Dorfman and Reginald A. Shipley. New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1956. xvii, 590 pp. \$13.50.

This exhaustive discussion of androgenic steroids and their metabolic relatives is divided into the biochemistry (with considerable discussion of intermediate steroid metabolism), the physiology, and the clinical applications of these basic disciplines. The discussion of biochemistry, which occupies 140 pages, presents a very complete discussion of the steroid chemistry, intermediary metabolism, and present knowledge of the sources and pathways by which the various steroids ultimately arrive in the urine. This discussion assumes no initial knowledge on the part of the reader and takes him stepwise from the most elementary to the most advanced concepts. A similar exhaustive attack is made on the physiological and clinical departments of the book. Although some small quibbles might be raised with regard to the particular assay methods discussed in the methodological

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