

Book Reviews

SURFACE ACTIVE AGENTS AND DETERGENTS, Vol. II, Anthony M. Schwartz, James W. Perry and Julian Berch, Robert E. Kriegger Publishing Co., Huntington, New York, 1977, xvii + 869 pages. Price \$35.50.

This is essentially a reprint of the classic 1958 book with the addition of Chapter 22A, a 32-page insertion entitled "Modern Laundering Formulations." The index has been expanded to include this chapter with the same excellent coverage given the balance of the book. The newer cosmetic specialty surfactants developed during the last 20 years therefore cannot be found here. Indeed the 20-page Chapter 25, entitled "Medical and Cosmetic Applications of Surfactants," could not be classed as complete even in 1958.

Chapter 15, "Biological Effects and Toxicity of Surfactants" (19 pages), was minimally adequate when published. Today an expensive reprint lacking in comprehensive completeness in this area is inexcusable.

Similarly Chapter 14, "Analysis and Analytical Behavior of Surfactants and Surfactant Auxiliaries" (45 pages), was excellent when first printed. However the dramatic improvements in chromatography technology in the last 20 years make this largely outdated, particularly as it would relate to cosmetic specialty items.

In the initial chapters on fundamentals, the lack of any update is not as serious since advances here have been slow. The book aims at all specialties having needs with surfactants. These suffer, just as the cosmetic areas, to the extent that no update was attempted at the end of each section.

For the library of a company having involvement with several facets of surfactant technology, this book has archival value if the first edition is not available. The updated chapter hardly justifies the purchase for anyone. The cosmetic chemist does not need this for his personal library.—JOHN H. WOOD—School of Pharmacy, Virginia Commonwealth University.

DISINFECTION, STERILIZATION AND PRESERVATION, 2nd Edition, Seymour S. Block, Editor, Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, Pa., 1977, xv + 1049 pages, 126 figures, 149 tables. Price \$48.50.

The first edition of this major work appeared in 1968 and represented a much needed successor to Reddish's "Antiseptics, Disinfectants, Fungicides and Chemical and Physical Sterilization" (1957). This second edition is likewise most welcome to a wide audience. As Dr. Block (University of Florida) indicates, the book should

be useful to practitioners, researchers, teachers and students; to those in industry, government and universities; to public health specialists, hospital personnel, food processors, bacteriologists, plant pathologists, physicians, dentists, chemists, biologists, veterinarians and engineers; and to professionals in many industries such as the production of pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and paper.

The book consists of 49 chapters by 55 contributors and covers methods of testing antimicrobials, specific antimicrobial chemical agents, chemical and physical sterilization, medical and health-related applications (e.g., swimming pools, dentistry, hospital waste), preservative and protective agents, antimicrobial modes of action and a historical and business overview.

As in all such compendia, individual chapters vary widely in quality of information, completeness and style. Particularly meritorious are units on testing sanitizers and bacteriostatic substances (C.H. Shaffer, Jr.), sterilization filtration (C.W. Fifield) and Block's own section on preservatives for industrial products. Several chapters are barely more than a

compilation of AOAC methods with little or no critical evaluation. In some ways, the format chosen is unnecessarily cumbersome. It makes little sense, for example, to separate by 300 pages two related chapters by Leland on antiprotozoan and related compounds or to devote a complete unit to tuberculocidal agents and disregard antivenerals. The final chapter on definition of terms is simplistic and would prove of greater value as an introductory unit for the benefit of the student reader. One can only regret the almost complete absence of data on the normal microbial biota of the human skin, mouth, urogenital tract, etc., which would seem to be of some interest in a text so deeply involved with chemicals intended to alter or eliminate such amphibions.

These caveats aside, the volume is an important resource, handsomely printed, and a major addition to the library of antimicrobial agents. The first edition was widely popular; this second will probably prove equally so, and deservedly.—LEO GREENBERG—Arnold & Marie Schwartz College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Long Island University.