

As valuable as the formal presentations are the informal and thought-provoking discussions which are well reported in the published proceedings. The booklet will be rewarding reading for those interested in the mode of action of neuromuscular blocking agents. In addition, the consideration given to drug receptor interaction, although naturally applied to the curare receptor, should prove very useful to those engaged in many other areas of pharmacological and physiological research.

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RADIATION BIOPHYSICS. By Howard L. Andrews. New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961. xii, 328 pp. \$11.35.

An alternative title for this book might be "A Brief Review of Elements of Radiation Biophysics," since it is rather more concerned with the physical sciences than with the biological. Included are chapters on elementary particles, quantum theory, mass and energy equivalence, X-rays, radioactivity, radiation measurements, radiation effects and health protection. This small volume does not make the best use of the space available, particularly in the initial chapters. The section concerned with X-ray production, including brief mention of such items as rectifiers, voltage doublers, resonance transformers, etc., adds little information of any use. For the more technically interested reader it is quite inadequate, while for the biologically oriented reader a totally false sense of simplicity is implied. Similarly, the section on high-energy accelerators consists of little more than a catalogue of the different types of machines available. The portion of the book dealing with conversion processes offers somewhat more basic theory, but again it is too brief.

The section on absorption of radiation, with particular application to X-ray technique, is well done but would benefit by expansion. More attention might have been given to the concept of exponential attenuation due to losses, and of inverse square law attenuation due to geometry, for without an understanding of these phenomena the interpretation of the film loses much of its significance. The discussion of radiation measuring instruments suffers from the usual difficulty: it is too brief.

The last part of the book, while divided into many small sections, appears to offer more of interest to the casual reader. The phrasing of some statements is open to question, for example a decelerating particle emitting Cerenkov radiation does not "decelerate to a velocity compatible with field propagation." The motion of the particle and the field emission are intimately related. Biological effects of radiation are mentioned. These last sections offer a quick review of some of the phenomena involved when living objects and radiation interact.

In summary, this book has a number of weak spots, in terms of unnecessary and inadequate hardware description. It does offer the reader a quick glimpse at many of the different fields of study involved in "Radiation Biophysics."

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