F. F. Soprunov: Biochemie der Helminthen I. Der Energiehaushalt der Helminthen. *VEB Gustav Fischer Verlag, Jena 1978, 149 pp., 34 Figs. Price 35 DM.*

The book was published in the series Parasitologische Schriftenreihe and it explains the metabolic processes in which the energetic metabolism of parasitic helminths differs from universal schemes valid for a majority of animals. In the introduction, the author states that he did not intend to write a complete monograph, but he stipulates the right of a subjective approach which is necessary for a creative compilation of the materials. In spite of this, all those engaged in the biochemistry of helminths will appreciate the book also as a source of both modern and classical literary data on the biochemistry of this animal group: of the 149 pages as much as 22 are devoted to citations. Also a large number of tables, often very extensive and carefully documented by literary citations, may supply useful and immediately applicable information to anyone who is concerned with this subject. However, the book — just due to its conception — is not intended only for this relatively narrow circle of readers. Since the author takes every opportunity to elucidate the problems and relationships together with the description of facts and phenomena, his book is of a great value in terms of documentation and instigation to comparative biochemists and biochemists in general. A short but very useful chapter on the biology of helminths will help to better understanding even to those who are not very interested in parasitology as a scientific branch. The book is particularly recommended to teachers of biochemistry, as they will find there an understandable and well-founded explanation of the metabolism of an animal group which is not only of practical importance, but also unique in its secondary adaptation of basic chemical processes. Unfortunately, even in comprehensive textbooks of biochemistry this subject is almost completely neglected. An interesting and very instructive chapter on the history of helminth biochemistry will probably evoke some nostalgia in those who remember the forties, but it will be certainly very informative also for the youngest generation. The author's humorous note "It's lucky that the scientists study the world but did not create it — such a world would be schematically correct but unbearably logical" is suitable not only for the discussion on helminth biochemistry of the thirties, but also for many other problems solved at the present time.

If the author wanted his book to be at a high scientific up-to-date level, he could not avoid very specialized and complicated contemplations which can be fully utilized by readers with a special biochemical erudition. Nevertheless, the book will be of great value also to helminthologists who are not directed to biochemistry; thanks to a carefully prepared comprehensive index they may easily find out all peculiarities of energetic metabolism of the species they are interested in — as far as they are known.

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