Reviews.

MATERIA MEDICA AND THERAPEUTICS. By J. Mitchel Bruce, M.D. London: Cassell and Co., Limited.

This, the forty-seventh thousand issued, is a revised and enlarged edition of this well-known volume. Published first in 1884, it has been repeatedly revised and enlarged during the last twenty years.

The present edition has been brought up to the level of our latest knowledge, and more detail than was formerly given has been introduced respecting the chemical and pharmaceutical relations of the individual drugs, while an entirely new part has been added containing an account of the materia medica and therapeutics of the drugs in the Indian and Colonial addendum to the British Pharmacopœia. R. J. S. S.

THE SCIENCE AND ART OF PRESCRIBING. By Colbeck and Chaplin. Second edition, revised and enlarged. London: Henry Kimpton, 1906. Price 3s. 6d. net.

The object of this book has been to provide a short and reliable guide to the art of prescribing, especially from a clinical and practical point of view. This second edition also contains an appendix, showing the chief ingredients of the more important patent medicines.

A large number of prescriptions are given, arranged, for convenience, under the various systems of the body to which their action is believed to be directed, and under each disease a short indication of the general line of treatment is given.

The book has proved to be useful in practice, both as an assistance to the memory, and as helping the prescriber to keep out of a groove. It is certainly worth adding to one's library. R. J. S. S.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF TUBERCULOSIS. Vol. i., No. 1. January, 1907. Published Quarterly. Single copies, 1s. 6d.; annual subscription, 5s., post free. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox.

The object of this journal is the study of tuberculosis in its sociological aspects as well as from the point of view of the physician. "Sociology now claims a right to tender evidence and deduce conclusions, and insists that such a malady as tuberculosis must be studied with due regard to human action in relation to natural, social and economic conditions of life. Not only is State action imperative for the protection of each country, but international co-operation is essential, if such comprehensive and scientifically-directed policy is to be adopted as shall make for the extermination of this bane of humanity."

This is exactly the relation that is gradually being recognised as obligatory for the solution of the problem of Army sanitation: that, in fact, the duty of disease prevention is not incumbent solely on the medical man, but is one which bears on every member of the com-

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munity in his degree, and that every member should receive such instruction as may be necessary to enable him to take his share in the work.

Tuberculosis is probably the one disease in which it may prove comparatively easy to work up popular enthusiasm to such a degree that it shall stimulate legislation. It is widespread; it has a strongly pathetic side in real life; it has, moreover, a permanent place in literature, both biographical and romantic. It is, therefore, suitable for popular discussion.

But there are other diseases, probably as important economically, which do not lend themselves to popular treatment. Syphilis, for example, demands as radical treatment as tuberculosis: it is emphatically a disease which can be dealt with only by State action; even more than tuberculosis, its etiology is well known and its causation under control. Sentiment is unfortunately against State action in this matter: instead of State prevention of disease it has been known as the State regulation of vice, and does not now exist. But with an example of organised action for the suppression of one disease, it may be easier for future generations to apply similar methods to the elimination of other sources of economic loss.

Professor Clifford Allbutt and Sir Samuel Wilks contribute interesting articles, which show the gradual development of present methods of treatment, while, on the other hand, Dr. R. W. Philip points out the way in which further progress is likely to be made. Sir R. D. Powell, Dr. Byron Bramwell and Sir J. W. Moore deal with the "Care and Control of the Consumptive Poor" in England, Scotland and Ireland respectively; these deal with organisation and methods; while Sir Lauder Brunton writes an important article on "Tuberculosis and National Efficiency." Sir Herman Weber contributes a short but comprehensive and suggestive article on "Climate as a Factor in the Treatment of Tuberculosis"; Dr. F. Hare's article on the "Treatment of Hæmoptysis by Nitrite of Amyl" is dealt with elsewhere.

The number also includes information as to institutions for the tuberculous, health stations, and a number of reviews and notices of books, preparations and appliances.

The whole number is valuable and interesting, and the journal promises to be exceedingly useful to all physicians. R. J. S. S.

MANUAL OF ASEPTIC SURGERY. By Major E. A. R. Newman, M.D., I.M.S., late House-Surgeon, West London Hospital. Published by Messrs. Thacker, Spink and Co., Calcutta. Price Rs. 3.8.0.

This little book has been written with the idea of embodying in compact form information on the subject of asepsis and antisepsis, which is to be found scattered throughout larger manuals.

It is a work which is intended to be chiefly of use to those whose duties are mainly concerned with the treatment of the sick of native regiments, or of the civil population in India. The chapter on surgical bacteriology is very clearly written. The idea of using an unirritating, inhibitory, antiseptic dusting powder for wounds of the skin, in places like the groin or scrotum, before applying sterile dressings, seems to be a good one. The author makes out a strong case for the use of antiseptic lotions in which to keep instruments immersed during operations; but one would like to have seen stress laid on the importance of replacing instruments in

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the tray when finished with. The custom of leaving such articles lying about on the towels which surround the operation area is a very common one. The chapters on theatre construction and preparation of articles for surgical use are very good. One is glad to see the Primus stove mentioned in connection with sterilisers. For economy and comfort it is vastly superior to the miserable spirit lamps which are generally used in small theatres, and which are usually out of order just at the time the steriliser is wanted to prepare a fresh instrument. The chapter on the preparation of the hands is well up-to-date, and the author's warning, that "all wounds, septic or aseptic, should be touched as little as possible by the bare hands," is well worth remembering. One is glad to see that turpentine is strongly recommended as a fat solvent in the preparation of the skin. The amount of dirt which can be removed by rubbing with a turpentine swab, after apparently thorough washing with soap and water, is astonishing. One cannot agree with the author as to the necessity for free irrigation of aseptic liver abscess cavities. They seem to do quite well under simple drainage. The same applies to aseptic empyemata. The antiseptic treatment of chronic abscesses can, from personal experience, be completely recommended, and is a great improvement on the older methods. The chapter on aseptic precautions in ophthalmic surgery is very well written. It is not generally realised that solutions of perchloride of mercury of 1 in 2,000, can be safely used in the disinfection of the conjunctival sac.

The great majority of our officers put in one or more tours of foreign service in India, and as there are many stations in that country in which great opportunities for surgical practice amongst the natives exist, this little work may be recommended to those who find it necessary (owing to limited funds at their disposal) to improvise operating theatres and furniture, or to undertake the preparation of dressings and ligatures or other articles for surgical use. F. J. W. PORTER.

MODERN SURGICAL TECHNIQUE. By C. Yelverton Pearson, M.D., M.Ch., F.R.C.S. London: John Bale, Sons and Danielsson, Ltd. Pp. 392, 2 plates and 111 illustrations. 10s. 6d. net.

This book is one that should be read by every surgeon who wants a clear account of the principles of aseptic surgery and the methods by which its ends may best be attained. It will be found particularly useful by those who may not have been able to follow the rapid development of surgical opinion and practice and wish to bring their ideas on the subject up to date. And the greater part of the book, with the exception of those sections that deal with the actual operation, may, with advantage, be studied by sisters and nurses doing duty in operating theatres or in surgical wards. Numerous references to, and quotations from, the writings of leading authorities are given, and the author gives the results of his own experience and researches.

In the preliminary section we are glad to find the necessity of a practical knowledge of bacteriology insisted on; some knowledge of bacteriological methods must be the foundation of aseptic surgery.

The various channels of infection are discussed and their comparative importance weighed. The danger of trusting to antiseptic lotions for sterilising anything is insisted on, and some much-needed blows are struck at the hard-dying fetish, "1 in 20 carbolic."

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The section on prophylactic disinfection is the most valuable in the book. The difficult question of disinfection of the hands and of the patient's skin is fully dealt with, and the arguments for and against the use of gloves are well summarised.

The section on wound technique calls for little remark. Some of the methods of suture described seem needlessly complicated and are probably little used, unless by their inventors. Simple methods carefully and accurately used are far preferable.

In the last section the chapters on the preparation of the patient and on treatment after operations are very good. We have not found any mention of the use of adrenalin in the treatment of shock, or of the subcutaneous injection of solutions of glucose.

The whole book will well repay careful study and can be confidently recommended.

NOTES ON LOCAL ANÆSTHESIA IN GENERAL SURGERY. By J. W. Struthers, M.B., F.R.C.S.Ed. Edinburgh: Wm. Green and Sons. Pp. 136, 6 figures. 2s. 6d. net.

In this useful little book the present position of local anæsthesia is clearly set forth. The subject is one of great practical importance, particularly to those who may have to deal with surgical cases without skilled assistance, and it is one that as yet has not received the attention it deserves in this country. This book gives an excellent and thoroughly practical introduction to the subject, with references to the more important original work that has been done, and should be in the hands of every naval and military surgeon. The comparative merits of the various drugs employed are fully discussed, and the different methods of producing anæsthesia are well described, and are illustrated by a number of instructive cases, which bring out the practical points that must be attended to in order to ensure good results. The author does not appear to have employed the method of producing analgesia by intraspinal injections, though he gives a very good account of it. We believe that when this method becomes better known it will be found most useful in a great many cases.

We do not share the author's preference for cocaine, as eucaine is not only safer and equally effective, but has the very great practical advantage over cocaine in that it can be readily and certainly sterilised by boiling. And in the instructions given on p. 38 for preparing the solutions, it would be better to add the adrenalin after the solution has cooled to about the temperature of the body, not while it is almost at boiling point. The use of long, fine, blunt-pointed needles for infiltrating muscles and deep structures is not mentioned.

A word of warning to beginners may not be out of place. The successful employment of local anæsthesia depends on a thorough understanding of the principles of the method used, on a sound knowledge of the anatomy of the part to be anæsthetised, especially of its nerve supply, and on strict attention to a number of details of technique. It is not enough, as some seem to think, to arm one's self with a special pattern of syringe and a solution of a given formula. And we would strongly advise a beginner to acquire some little knowledge of and

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confidence in the method, and some degree of expertness in the technique, by means of a series of minor operations, before attempting any of the more complex procedures, such as radical cure of hernia.

HEATH'S MANUAL OF MINOR SURGERY AND BANDAGING. Thirteenth Edition, revised by Bilton Pollard, F.R.C.S. London: J. and A. Churchill. Pp. xiv., 409; 198 illustrations. 6s. net.

A book that has held its own for forty-five years and has reached its thirteenth edition has but little need of either introduction or commendation. Many generations of students and house-surgeons have profited by the sound and practical advice given in this book, which is marked throughout by the strong common sense and great experience of its author. The work of revision has been carefully done, and the book is in most respects thoroughly up-to-date. We are surprised to find 1 in 40 carbolic lotion recommended as an aid in the disinfection of the hands. And we have looked in vain for any mention of the iodine method of preparing catgut, which is by far the best and simplest method at present in use. These, however, are but minor blemishes, and detract but little from the value of the work as a guide to the young surgeon.

WAR WITH DISEASE. By F. F. Maccabe, M.B., Medical Officer, South of Ireland Imperial Yeomanry. Second Edition. Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1907. Price 1s. net.

The first edition of this little work was noticed in the Journal last year. The author has revised the four lectures of which it originally consisted, and has added two, of an elementary character, on ambulance work. The alterations that have been made are improvements; and the same success which attended the publication of the lectures, and that has speedily called for a new edition, will no doubt accompany the present issue.

APPLIED BACTERIOLOGY. By C. G. Moore and R. T. Hewlett. Third Edition. Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1906. 12s. 6d. net.

In this, the third edition of Messrs. Pearmain and Moore's well-known work, the place of the late Mr. Pearmain has been taken by Professor Hewlett, and, as stated in the preface, the volume has been practically rewritten and brought up to date.

The claim on the title page that it forms "an elementary handbook for the use of students of Hygiene, Medical Officers of Health, and Analysts," is, on the whole, well substantiated, the descriptions of bacteriological technique and apparatus being clear and easy to follow. In the chapters devoted to the principal bacterial diseases a large amount of information is put before the reader in a simple and systematic manner, and this section should prove of great service to those for whom the book is intended. The chapter upon the methods by which disease is spread, immunity, sero-therapy, &c., is perhaps scarcely as satisfactory, but, in the present state of our knowledge of these subjects, it can have been no easy task to steer between the Scylla of excessive details and the Charybdis of over-condensation.

Although dated June, 1906, the volume would appear to have made

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a somewhat tardy journey through the press, as the instances in which the work of the last two years is either unmentioned or briefly referred to in a footnote are more common than one would expect. For example, in speaking of syphilis, the authors give the place of honour to the bacillus of Lustgarten, while the *Spirochæta pallida* is dismissed in five lines.

The portion of the book devoted to protozoal diseases is particularly condensed, and little reference is made to the progress of recent years. Sleeping sickness and kala-azar together occupy less than a page, and in the case of yellow fever no work of later date than 1901 is alluded to.

The chapters on disinfection and on the bacteriological examination of water, milk, air, &c., are clear and comprehensive, and will probably prove of most service to the reader.

The illustrations in the text are not very numerous, but the volume concludes with a series of coloured plates, which give a good idea of the cultural characteristics of the commoner micro-organisms and their appearance as seen in stained films.

THE BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF WATER SUPPLIES. Savage. 6s. 6d. net.

This is an excellent little book, and gives in a very readable form just what the beginner in water bacteriology requires to know in order to form an opinion as to the purity of a water submitted for examination.

The fallacies underlying the quantitative examination are closely stated, and it is pointed out that many of the published results, lacking particulars as to reaction of medium, time of incubation, &c., are practically valueless for purposes of comparison. The most recent work on the bacteriology of excreta, sewage and soil is fully considered in its relation to the bacteriological examination of water. The characteristics of the *B. coli*, typhoid and streptococcus groups are carefully given, and the value of each test is discussed. The author then considers the contents of various waters with regard to *B. coli*, and states that "there is no evidence or observations which have ever shown that *B. coli* reasonably defined is present in any numbers in sources which have not been exposed to some form of fæcal contamination." This is the keynote of the modern bacteriological examination of water, and unless the truth of the statement is admitted there is little value in the process. What is to be considered as a typical *B. coli*, or rather as the author prefers to call it "excretal *B. coli*," is clearly laid down, and the necessity of a numerical estimation of this organism is insisted upon. The vexed question of the value of the so-called atypical members of the coli group, as indicators of pollution, is discussed with judgment, and the absence of evidence that these organisms are derived from the typical members is commented upon. The author admits "organisms which are only atypical in that they do not produce indol or fail to coagulate milk" as indicators of polution, and most bacteriologists of experience will agree that the presence of such bacteria in a small quantity of water is undoubted evidence of contamination.

The book is clearly written, and can be recommenced as a safe guide to a difficult subject. W. H. H.

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