REVIEWS.

NEW BOOKS.

Diathermy in Medical and Surgical Practice. By Claude Saberton, M.D. London: Cassell & Co., Limited. 1920. (7s. 6d. net.)

The aim of this little work (pp. 138 with bibliography and index) is to serve as a guide to diathermy. It is profusely illustrated, and has a complete and useful bibliography. At the end of the chapter on physiological effects, the author states that the effects appear to be brought about mainly by the heating of the tissues, and adds that this is not the only beneficial effects of high-frequency currents. What are the other actions of diathermy? The heating effect has been mainly dealt with. The treatment of this part of the subject is somewhat superficial, sketchy, and second-hand. If diathermy is to find a secure place in electro-therapeutics, much spade work requires still to be done in this direction. The chapter on methods of application is well done, and then follows a chapter on medical applications in a number of affections in which diathermy has been found useful, such as angina pectoris, intermittent claudication, chilblains, feeble circulation, piles, infantile paralysis, paralysis agitans, disseminated sclerosis, &c. Diathermy has also been found applicable in surgery, because its heating effects, if properly concentrated, can be increased so as to destroy tissue. Among the advantages enumerated are—the operation is bloodless, rapid, and easy, no surgical shock, and the parts are sterilised; among the disadvantages—danger of secondary haemorrhage, tendency to formation of "cheloid," &c. There is one practical disadvantage—the danger of a breakdown during an operation in the instrument itself, and the fouling of the electrode with tissue débris, which is difficult to detach, and other minor troubles, such as shocks to operator and assistants, which, with all precautions, are difficult.
to avoid. On the whole, the author is to be congratulated on having fulfilled his object in bringing together, in a readable and lucid manner, a number of facts and opinions on diathermy, which will help others in their study of this method of treatment in the field of electro-therapeutics.

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**Theory and Practice of Nursing.** By M. A. Gullan. London: H. K. Lewis & Co., Limited. 1920. (10s. 6d. net.)

Amongst the many books available for the use of nurses in training, this must rank high as a valuable practical text-book. It is a well-ordered store of accurate information, the aim being to build up the knowledge of the pupil-nurse in a definite sequence. The arrangement of the book for this purpose is well carried out, and the provision of many blank pages for notes and references is, from the pupil's point of view, advantageous. From the title of the volume we would have expected more information regarding the nursing of surgical cases, but this defect could with advantage be remedied in a future edition. The medical side has been treated in a refreshingly concise manner, and the text abounds in useful practical suggestions which will prove valuable to the nurse in her daily work.

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**Organic Chemistry for Medical, Intermediate Science, and Pharmaceutical Students.** By A. Killen Macbeth, M.A., D.Sc., F.I.C. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1920. (6s. 6d. net.)

This is a small book of about 250 pages, and deals with the subject of organic chemistry in a most interesting fashion. The first three chapters deal with the purification and examination of organic compounds, including the determination of molecular weights, the whole being stated in language free from ambiguity, and so plain that no student can have any difficulty in mastering the principles involved; the remaining chapters deal with groups of compounds as the hydrocarbons,
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halogen compounds, alcohols, &c., the methane and benzene derivatives being taken separately. As a handbook for the medical student it should be invaluable. There are certain passages which he will omit as not included in his syllabus; but the chapter on "Natural products" he will not fail to read and digest, for it deals with the physiological chemistry of a subsequent portion of the medical curriculum. An interesting feature of the book is the series of questions attached to each chapter, which focus the student's attention on its main points; unfortunately, no answers are given to the arithmetical problems, a blemish which can easily be remedied in subsequent editions.

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Warfare in the Human Body. By Morley Roberts. London: Eveleigh Nash Company, Limited. 1920. (18s. net.)

The old Latin proverb, Ne sutor supra crepidam, is untrue of biology, for workers in one department have their field of vision narrowed, and though they gain in depth they almost inevitably lose something in width of perception. New ideas often come from those who have no prejudices about a subject, and no preconceptions. These biological essays by Mr. Morley Roberts deserve a warm welcome for their original outlook and arresting ideas. Professor Keith, in an introduction, says of them that they are "records made by a layman after years of hard thinking and close observation, which he now places before his professional brethren with a skilled pen, a rare wealth of apt simile, using always the diffident and modest language of the real searcher after truth." The book consists of eleven essays on various medical and biological subjects such as "Method in science," "The theory of immunity," "Malignancy," and "The origin of therapeutic bathing." Mr. Roberts pleads for an extended use of analogy in the consideration of biological processes. "Since general laws do obtain in the universe," he writes, "their particular application in all cases must have essential points of resemblance." The process of mitosis is compared to colonisation, and the catalysts by which the body cells act to the tools made use of by the colonists. In the essay on "Malignancy" the same method is occasionally employed.
For instance, a parallelism is drawn between the growth of a cancer metastasis in the body and the position of the negro community in the United States. His view is that malignant disease is due to disturbance of the mutual inhibition of connective tissue and epithelial tissue, and he suggests that a similar morbid condition of the pituitary to that responsible for gigantism may be the cause of this disturbance. The author combats Darwin's view that unfavourable variations must be without effect on evolution, and believes that changes have been brought about by the constant patching up of weak places. This mechanical reaction to stress is best seen in the development of the heart. The interesting view is put forward that the Metazoa originated from some protozoon by a failure of normal physiological fission. "We see here how theories of disease may be modified according to the point of view taken. From that, shall I say, of a protozoon Hippocrates or Hunter nothing can be more obvious than that a failure of mitosis would be a calamity, the birth of a monster, of Siamese twins, among the normally constituted unicellular organisms." Mr. Roberts illuminates every subject on which he touches, and his book will arouse interest and stimulate thought. In his own words, "the whole of this volume is in the nature of a plea for the use of the imagination in science, so long as it is controlled by ascertained results in allied branches of learning."

Synopsis of Hygiene. By W. Wilson Jameson, M.A., M.D. Aberd., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.Lond., and F. T. Marchant, M.R.San.I. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1920. (18s. net.)

In a small volume of 400 pages the authors "attempt to epitomise the views of accepted authorities and the most recent work in the huge subject of hygiene," and hope "that the manual will prove useful for rapid revision of D.P.H. examination work." The subject is presented under well-arranged headings, and the information up to date and surprisingly full for so small a book. The section on infantile mortality, maternity, and child welfare is particularly well done, and in the short chapter of 26 pages devoted to vital statistics the
authors have succeeded in giving a very readable account of a difficult subject. The section on sanitary law gives the main provisions of the Acts applying to England and Wales, but omits those dealing exclusively with Scotland or Ireland. We would suggest that the notes on chemistry be omitted in any future edition of the volume. The student usually prepares his own synopsis in the notes of the practical work he does in the laboratory, and the space (43 pages) devoted to this section is so small for a practical subject that it might with advantage be given over to additional theoretical matter. On p. 347 there is an obvious printer's error—"Standard solution of ammon. chloride, 1 c.c. = 0.01 mgm. NH" should read NH₃. The importance of normal solutions in volumetric analysis requires a more accurate definition than the one given—"A normal solution, written \( \frac{n}{V} \), is the molecular weight of the substance in grams, having regard to its valency or basicity, dissolved in a litre of distilled water." From this the student might assume that the reagent is added to one litre of distilled water, whereas it should be dissolved in distilled water and made up to 1,000 c.c. so that the finished solution measuring one litre will contain that proportion of the molecular weight of the substance in grams corresponding to one gram of available hydrogen or its equivalent. Considering the space at their disposal the authors are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have accomplished their task, and the book can be recommended to D.P.H. students as a concise guide to examination work.

The Centenary Volume of Charles Griffin and Company, Limited, Publishers, 1820-1920. With Foreword by Lord Moulton, P.C., G.B.E., K.C.B., F.R.S. With Portraits and other Illustrations. London: Charles Griffin & Company, Limited. 1920.

This handsome volume is worthy of the great publishing house which issues it, and of the occasion which has called it forth. One of the most delightful works of a professional kind which the present writer ever studied was one published by this firm thirty years ago, Obersteiner's Anatomy of the Central Nervous
Organs in Health and in Disease, translated, with annotations and additions, by Dr. Alex. Hill. Messrs. Griffin have in the past accomplished a great task in supplying British workers with valuable books of a technical character, and have indeed been described as the makers of modern technology. Over ninety per cent of their publications are technical and scientific text-books, manuals, or monographs. But we can readily appreciate Lord Moulton’s conviction that the work before the firm is heavier and more responsible than at any previous time, since the future of our industries must depend largely on their technology, and this again must depend on the spread of that knowledge which has been the special care of Messrs. Griffin. About a dozen contributors have taken part in producing this volume, and a perusal of the successive chapters gives an interesting account of the history and accomplishments of the firm. In its earlier years it was located in Glasgow, and when in 1820 it published its first volume and adopted its book-plate or trade-mark, the latter included the oak tree of the Arms of Glasgow. The House removed to London in 1848, but were publishers to the University of Glasgow as recently as the early seventies, when the appointment was transferred to the present holders. The centenary volume, it may be added, was printed by a Glasgow firm. To Messrs. Griffin we heartily wish continued prosperity and increasing usefulness.

A Manual of Neurasthenia (Nervous Exhaustion). By Ivo Geikie Cobb, M.D., M.R.C.S. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1920. (12s. 6d. net.)

This volume can be recommended to medical practitioners as a well-balanced treatise on a subject which is so far only scantily dealt with in text-books of medicine. Of late there has been a tendency on the part of the Freudian school to limit the term “neurasthenia” to one class of case, or rather to cases arising from one cause, viz., auto-eroticism in young people. Dr. Cobb, however, gives a much wider interpretation to the term, recognising several groups of symptoms as more or less classical. These are physical and mental fatigue, headache, subjective
sensations of all kinds, and gastro-intestinal disorders, a symptom-complex which, in most cases, can readily be recognised. He gives a clear and unbiased outline of its etiology, emphasising the important factors, a full and well-stated consideration of its symptoms, and a free discussion of the various lines of treatment based on a wide experience. Indeed, the latter half of the volume is almost entirely devoted to treatment, a consideration which renders the book peculiarly helpful to practitioners, who are often at a loss to know how to deal with such cases. Patients so afflicted are only too apt to pass on from one doctor to another still unsatisfied, and finally may drift into the hands of the quack. The book concludes with a well-chosen bibliography and a good index.

Radiography in the Examination of the Liver, Gall-Bladder, and Bile Ducts. By ROBERT KNOX, M.D. London: William Heinemann (Medical Books), Limited. (7s. 6d. net.)

This book, by the pen of so well known an authority on radiography as Dr. Robert Knox, is sure to command the attention of all radiographers. It consists of 64 pages, and is profusely illustrated. The author points out in his introductory remarks that with some workers the percentage of successes in gall-stone diagnosis by x-rays rises as high as between 80 and 90, and falls as low as 5 to 10 with others, and he himself confesses that for many years he was sceptical regarding the usefulness of radiography in the diagnosis of gall-stones, but a review of the literature of the subject and recorded observations of such workers as Thurstan, Holland, Ledoux, Lebard, Carmen and Miller, McLeod, &c., gave him cause for thought, and led to the investigations of which this book is an account in the main. The author begins with the anatomy of the liver, gall-bladder, and ducts, then goes on to consider the pathology of gall-stones, classification and chemical composition, experimental investigation on absorption, co-efficients of gall-stones and surrounding tissues, radiographic appearances of gall-stones, technique of examination, situations in which gall-stones may be found, differential diagnosis, pathology of gall-bladder, record of cases, résumé of literature, and general considerations. On pp. 18,
19, and 20 an account (with tables) is given of some interesting experiments with filtered and unfiltered rays, and the conclusion come to is that a soft tube is of no use and results can only be got by a tube emitting medium rays. There are some beautiful radiograms shown, and fine photographs illustrative of position of patient in radiography of liver region. A great deal is written about differential diagnosis of shadows—renal, biliary, and calcareous, &c.—but little is said of the clinical aid. If more care were given in the clinical diagnosis, much laborious and often disappointing radiographic work would be avoided.

NEW EDITIONS.

Public Health Laboratory Work (Chemistry). By H. R. Kenwood, C.M.G., M.B., D.P.H., F.C.S. Seventh Edition. London: H. K. Lewis & Co., Limited. 1920. (15s. net.)

No more striking proof of the continued advance of the problems of practical public health work could be had than the fact that in Professor Kenwood’s well-known text-book the chemical and bacteriological work are now separated, the volume at present under review dealing with the former section entirely. The seventh edition well sustains the excellence hitherto attained, and for clearness of diction and superiority of arrangement it has nothing to learn from any of its rivals. In one respect, however, it might be brought up to date, and that is with respect to quite a number of the illustrations. The somewhat diagrammatic representations on pages 286-7, 297, 301-2 might well be replaced by figures which would convey some more definite idea of the structures indicated. The chapters on water are copious and practically exhaustive, and Chapter XIV should be read with great care, as the grounds upon which an opinion of the water is given are set out with unusual clearness. After all, a competent laboratory man might quite well do the entire actual analysis, but the skilled and trained mind is essential when a reasoned opinion is required at the end. In this chapter the part dealing with the bacteriological aspect, short though it is, might have been entirely left out with advantage. From the student’s point of view the methodical