The Endocrine Organs. By Sir Edward A. Schafer, LL.D., D.Sc., M.D., F.R.S. Pp. ix. +156. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1916. Price 10s. 6d. net.

This volume is founded on the Lane medical lectures delivered by the author in 1913. They are now amplified and illustrated with tracings and diagrams and make a most attractive volume. The author seeks to apply the term “autocoid” to a specific organic substance formed by the cells of one organ, and, when passed into the circulation, capable of influencing the function of another organ. These autocoids may have a stimulating effect (hormones) or an inhibitory effect (chalones).

The development and histological structure of the various endocrine organs are described. The verdict passed on the various functions which have been ascribed to the parathyroids is the only safe one—that of not proven.

The author, however, inclines to the view that their function is independent of that of the thyroid. There is a reference to accessory thyroids in the neck and anterior mediastinum, but they may occur elsewhere, and have been met with in the submaxillary region and in the nose. The thymus is briefly but adequately dealt with. Its relationship to status lymphaticus is mentioned, but there is no reference to thymus death. The explanation of that extraordinary phenomenon is unknown, but we think the author would at least have mentioned it if he had ever had the fortune (or misfortune) to meet with a case.

The suprarenals and pituitary are very fully discussed, and their action is illustrated by some beautiful tracings. We do not share the author’s assurance that a second dose of pituitary extract has no effect on blood-pressure, or may cause a fall. This certainly may occur; but we have just as often seen the first effect repeated after a second, third, or even fourth injection. The pineal is regarded as still sub judice. Secretions are discussed, and the book closes with an account of the internal secretions of the reproductive organs.

The Problems of Physiological and Pathological Chemistry and of Metabolism. By Dr. Otto von Furth. Translated by Allen J. Smith. Pp. xv. + 667. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1916. Price 25s. net.

This is an interesting and readable account of a difficult subject. It contains a full account of the chemistry of digestion and of ferment
action. It discusses the formation of urea and purins, and the significance of the amino acids. There are several chapters dealing with the metabolism of fats and carbohydrates and with diabetes. Nutritional requirements, gas exchange, tissue respiration, and fever are also discussed. Descriptions of laboratory methods are omitted. While much of the discussion is necessarily very technical, the book has much in it to appeal to the reader who is unable to follow all its flights into the higher chemistry.

The broad and careful lines upon which it is written are illustrated by the following quotations:—“However much the author realises the importance of hypothesis towards future discovery, he feels that in this case (elimination of amino acids) the metabolic chemist has every reason for keeping close to the fundamental facts lest he risk loss of all the footing on which he stands.”

“The author has never quite grasped why scientists so often burden life with insistence upon definitions of things whose real nature they themselves are unable to sharply and clearly depict.”

After insisting that the onus of proving an hypothesis lies with its proposer, and that there is no obligation on the critic to disprove it, the author quotes the following verse, which will bear repetition:—

Oh, learned man, ’tis thus I know you face to face!
What you don’t touch stands miles from you apace;
What you don’t grasp, for you is gone for woe and weal;
What you don’t see, you’re sure cannot be real;
What you don’t weigh, ne’er has a weight for you;
What you don’t coin, you think don’t count a sou.

There are numerous references to literature and we can heartily commend the book.

When to Advise Operation in General Practice. By A. Rendle Short, M.D., B.S., B.Sc.(Lond.), F.R.C.S.(Eng.). Pp. 279. Bristol: John Wright & Sons, Ltd. 1916. Price 5s. net.

As the title indicates, this book is written for the general practitioner, and there can be no doubt that it meets a felt want. The field is large because, owing to the advances made in diagnosis and treatment by specialists, the busy practitioner meets every day with cases, the proper treatment of which depends on the knowledge and skill of the specialist.

The author rightly includes in his list of cases not only emergencies in which the delay of a day or even a few hours may entail disaster, but also those insidious and chronic cases in which a cancer is apt to be overlooked until it has become inoperable, or some other condition, remediable safely by operation at an early stage, is allowed to.
undermine the patient's strength till the risk of an operation is too
great to be recommended.

A great deal of valuable information is furnished by Mr. Short with
regard to such cases, and he might with advantage have made the list
even more comprehensive. Guidance, for instance, might have been
offered in the treatment of certain injuries of the eye, where enuclea-
tion of the injured eye may save the sight of the other one, or where
a timely iridectomy may arrest the progress of glaucoma, which would
otherwise inevitably lead to blindness. Or, again, it seems a pity
that the practitioner's attention is not directed to the dangers of a
slowly developing empyema if left undrained.

In a future edition we would suggest that the chapter on the acute
abdomen should include acute appendicitis as one of the possible
conditions to be reckoned with. By selecting "acute appendicitis"
as the subject of a chapter—the first—the author follows the lead of
systematic text-books, but this method does not seem appropriate to
the present enterprise. "In this chapter we shall assume that there
is little or no doubt the diagnosis of acute appendicitis is correct"; but
surely it is just on the subject of diagnosis that the general practitioner
often most needs help. "Is it appendicitis, or is it colic?" is frequently
his anxious question when summoned to the bedside of an "acute
abdomen."

The "colics" are appropriately discussed as a subheading of the
"acute abdomen"; but among the causes of severe colic, faecal impaction
in the proximal part of the great intestine might with advantage
have been more adequately dealt with.

The author frequently refers to actual cases to illustrate his points
in a manner which is both interesting and instructive.

The Bacteriology of Dysentery in Malaya. By Henry Fraser, M.D.
(Aberd.). Pp. 44. Singapore: Kelly & Walsh, Ltd. 1916.
Price 3s. 6d. net.

An important contribution to the investigation of the etiology of
dysentery forms this latest issue of the "Studies from the Institute
for Medical Research, Federated Malay States." Dr. Fraser's reputa-
tion as an accurate observer is further enhanced by the evidence which
he embodies in this brochure. His investigations result in simplifying
the classification of the bacilli of dysentery to two main groups: Shiga's
bacillus and the mannite-fermenting dysentery bacilli. Some 800
cases provide the basis of the study, which concludes with a suggested
treatment by sensitised or agglutinated vaccines.
The sub-title of this work—The Principles of Clinical Pathology—gives a fair idea of its scope. It is a sort of enlarged compendium of the paragraphs on pathology which are found in the larger treatises on medicine. There are twelve chapters of unequal merit, one of the best being that on the circulation, the weakest being that on the blood. In the latter we read that there is no necessity for making a distinction between normal and pathological red marrow. The author makes no attempt to classify or distinguish the different leukaemias and lymphadenoma, and the result is a confused jumble. The word proteid is used throughout for protein. Emphasis is frequently indicated by extra spacing of the letters, with the annoying result that the reader has to hunt for the spaces between the words. The references are almost exclusively Teutonic. The translation appears to be well done; but on p. 352 we read “Certain diabetics are better equipped to take care of lævulose . . . than dextro-rotatory carbohydrates.” The book failed to arouse in us more than a placid interest, but we can commend it as a careful and conservative account of its subject.

The Institutional Care of the Insane in the United States and Canada.
Edited by H. M. Hurd, M.D. Vol. II. Pp. 897. With 37 Illustrations. Baltimore : Johns Hopkins Press. 1916.

This is the second volume of a complete history of the care of the insane in the United States and Canada issued under the editorship of Dr. Hurd. The first volume was reviewed in the July number of this Journal. The present volume contains particulars of the various asylums and State hospitals in 24 of the United States, arranged alphabetically. The amount of space given to the different States varies very much, of course, as they are of very different ages. Amongst those dealt with in this volume, naturally the New England States figure most prominently, as they are the oldest. The first public reference to the insane was in Connecticut in the middle of the seventeenth century. The first State Act dealing with them was, however, not passed until 1694, in Massachusetts, and Connecticut followed with an almost identical Act in 1699. But these Acts did not provide for special institutions for their care and treatment, and it was not until more than a hundred years later that this step was taken. As in this country, these were first erected by private funds, and the institutions built by these means are the oldest in the country. Some of them have maintained their original status, but others, as in this
country also, combined their original purpose with State or local public requirements. Of these older asylums, M'Lean Hospital, Hartford Retreat, and Worcester Hospital are the best known. The detailed histories of these and other institutions form interesting reading. Views of many of the asylums form the majority of the illustrations; and it is interesting to note how large an extent the system of having the asylum built in detached blocks prevails, especially in the newer asylums. Indeed, this system was in vogue in the States at a period considerably prior to its adoption in this country. The first State asylum built on the "cottage" plan was that at Kankakee, in 1880. It is to Dr. M'Farland of Illinois that the chief credit for the new departure must be given; but it took many years of agitation before his views found acceptance. The cottage or villa system has now many adherents, for, as already stated, many of the later asylums have adopted it for administrative and economic reasons. There is much information in the book about the laws in various States relating to the admission of patients to the hospitals, and the history of all the State asylums, as well as of the more important private institutions, is also given. It is a mine of facts and a most useful book of reference.

The Third Report of the Indigenous Drugs Committee. Pp. iv. + 377. India: Calcutta Superintendent Government Printing. 1916.

We do not think that the sciences of pharmacology and of therapeutics are likely to be materially advanced by the methods of obtaining reports on medicinal substances as exemplified in this report. And this is evidently the opinion of the committee itself, who feel that the work should form part of that of a Chair of Pharmacology in connection with the School for Tropical Medicine. This suggestion is most reasonable. The reports, which have been produced with much labour, are contradictory; the dosage employed is arbitrary and not sufficiently varied; inferences are drawn from insufficient observations; and statements are made with regard to the possessing of a pharmacological action, e.g. cholagogue, on the flimsiest evidence. The want of normal or control observations is evident on every page.

Rheum emodi is a good laxative, unreliable, and either does or does not cause griping.

Ixora coccinea alleviated the conditions in some cases of dysentery, and in the doses employed produced little or no effect in others.

Melia azadirachta is not as valuable as quinine for malaria, at least in the doses used, failing entirely in some cases.

Holarrhena antidysenterica is pronounced by three investigators as valuable, and by three as almost valueless.

Berberis lycium is of little value in malaria, and Symplocos racemosa of but doubtful value in diarrhoea and dysentery.
**The Story of a Red Cross Unit in Serbia.** By James Berry, B.S., F.R.C.S.; F. May Dickinson Berry, M.D., B.S.; and W. Lyon Blease, LL.M. Pp. xvi. + 293. With 28 Illustrations. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1916. Price 6s. net.

This is a most fascinating story of the work accomplished by the Anglo-Serbian Hospital Unit during the fateful year spent with the Serbian Army. That year "was a strange mixture of tragedy, comedy, and pathos" to those who took part in the work of the Unit, and the authors have succeeded in reflecting these mixed elements in the record now before us. No one can read it without being deeply moved to sympathy with the Serbian people, or without feeling a glow of pride in the heroic deeds of our ally. To medical readers the chapter on "Typhus and how we dealt with it" will prove most interesting and instructive as the record of a concrete experiment in preventive medicine, carried out under the most difficult conditions with remarkable success. Mr. and Mrs. James Berry and their colleagues in the Unit are to be congratulated on the excellent work they accomplished at Vrnjatehka Banja, as well as on the manner in which they have recorded their experiences.

**The Influence of Joy.** By George van Ness Dearborn. Pp. 223. London: William Heinemann. 1916. Price 5s. net.

This volume of the "Mind and Health Series" is stated by the author to be "an essay intended to set forth some of the hygienic and therapeutic sanctions of organic happiness. Some of its readers will find that it substantiates their belief, already firm, in the reality of joy's bodily influence; and a few of them may be originally convinced of it, those especially to whom 'cold facts' appeal; while still fewer may see in the endeavour a slight but sincere contribution to the science of the relationship of mind and body—the two glistening sides of our soul's shield."

The author enters into a considerable amount of physiological detail regarding the influence of the emotions on nutrition, the circulation, the nervous system, and the secretion of the ductless glands. Having shown, with great wealth of illustration and argument, that "happiness is strongly dynamogenic," the author devotes a brief concluding section of his work to some practical hints on the cultivation of happiness, and the means of avoiding worry, hurry, over-fatigue, fear, and other enemies of joy. The book is clearly written, and supplies a useful survey of recent scientific work on the influence of emotional states on the organs and processes of the body.