NEW BOOKS AND NEW EDITIONS.

A System of Medicine. Edited by William Osler, M.D., and Thomas McCrae, M.D. Volume V. Diseases of the Alimentary Tract. Pp. 903. The Oxford Medical Publications. London: Henry Frowde, and Hodder & Stoughton. 1909.

The fifth volume of the System of Medicine deals with disease of the alimentary tract, and should gain recognition as the standard work of reference on the subject. In a volume of 900 pages of comparatively small type, diseases of the alimentary system have been treated very exhaustively. Throughout, the value of the text is enhanced by numerous references to the more important literature of the subject. What illustrations there are are well executed, and the index is most complete.

The contributors, with the exception of Dr. Rolleston, are drawn from Canada and the United States, and are all recognised authorities on the subjects which they discuss. Opening with an introductory section on the critical relations which may exist between disturbed physiological activity and structural changes as expressed by morbid processes, the volume proceeds to a detailed account of morbid processes from the mouth to the colon. Much interest attaches to the articles on diseases of the pancreas, by Dr. Opie, and diseases of the intestine, by Professor Stengel. Functional disorders of the stomach are well treated by Professor Friedenwald, organic diseases of the stomach by Dr. Martin, while diseases of the liver, gall-bladder and biliary ducts is from the pen of Professor Kelly.

It would be idle to attempt a detailed criticism of such a work. Throughout it is on a high standard, and the editors are to be congratulated on the production of a volume which should certainly take a leading place as a standard work of reference on disorders of the alimentary tract.

The Body at Work. By Alex. Hill, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.S., sometime Master of Downing College, Cambridge. Pp. 448. London: Edward Arnold. 1908. Price 16s.

This book is very well described by its title. It is not a text-book of physiology in the ordinary sense, but is an account of the vital processes which are at work in the various organs and tissues of the body. The author aims at "treating with some thoroughness the more recondite and the more suggestive results of recent research, and tries to indicate the trend of modern thought regarding problems as yet
unsolved.” In the fulfilment of this task, let us say at once, the author seems to us to have succeeded admirably. Dr. Hill is a master in the art of exposition, and we hope that his assertion that he writes particularly for the amateur, and that he is concerned with the intrinsic interests of the science, apart altogether from its medical applications, will not lead the medical reader to imagine that the book is of no interest to him. This review is not likely to be seen by many except medical readers, and to such readers, at any rate to such as are not professional physiologists, we cordially recommend Dr Hill’s book.

A long chapter upon the fluids of the body gives a vivid picture of the part played by the lymph in the economy of the body. A chapter on the internal secretions summarises the results of recent research upon the ductless glands. The chapter dealing with digestion is of particular interest, and will furnish enlightenment to anyone who is ignorant of the part played by “hormones” in the production of the digestive juices, or of the latest views as to the rôle of the intestinal bacteria. The chapter on the nervous system gives an excellent account of the neurone theory, of the structure of nerve-cells, of the peri-cellular networks, and of the course of the nerve-fibres, and of recent researches on cerebral localisation. Perhaps the author is at his best in his discussion of the higher functions of the brain, but we could wish that this section had been a good deal longer. We need not further particularise the contents of the various chapters, but we think that, in concluding, we should give a word of praise to the illustrations. These are indeed comparatively few in number—forty-six—and are, for the most part, simply outline sketches, but they seem to us particularly clear and admirably adapted to elucidate the text.

Physiology and Pathology of the Urine, with Methods for its Examination.
By J. Dixon Mann, M.D., F.R.C.P. With Illustrations.
Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged. Pp. 324. London: Charles Griffin & Co. 1908. Price 10s. 6d.

Within the four years that have elapsed since the first edition of this manual appeared, numerous advances have been made in biological chemistry, and the currently accepted views upon many subjects as to the pathology of the urinary secretion have been considerably modified.

Accordingly, many changes and additions have been incorporated in the second edition. Among the subjects into which recent investigations have been chiefly introduced may be mentioned glycosuria, with the allied subject of the presence of oxybutyric acid and its derivatives; also the questions affecting uric acid and Bruce Jones protein.
The last forty pages of the book, dealing with the pathological conditions that cause changes in the urine, are brought thoroughly up to date and form an admirable summary of the subject of metabolism as it concerns this excretion.

As in the first edition, the references to original papers are given at the foot of each page, so that the book forms an excellent starting-point for anyone desirous of examining the bibliography upon various conditions.

The essentially practical scope of the book has been well kept in view, and it still forms an admirable manual for the clinician anxious to extend his observations by the help of laboratory methods.

A History of the Reading Pathological Society. By Jamieson B. Hurry, M.A., M.D., President of the Society. Pp. 179. With Illustrations. London: John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, Ltd. 1909. Price 7s. 6d. nett.

This volume contains a "brief historical résumé" of the Reading Pathological Society—a society founded on 13th July 1841, and during its long existence has taken a distinguished place among the medical societies of this country. The book contains an interesting description of many of the distinguished men who have been connected with the Society. It enumerates many of the important papers read before the Society, and also many of the cases and specimens exhibited at their meetings. Some of the specimens were of great variety, such as a "monstrosity with one head, four arms, and four legs," and a "double-headed infant." At another meeting a "calculus was exhibited which had been removed from the tonsil by incision. The incision caused the patient to cough with such violence that the calculus cracked the window-pane with which it came into contact." On another occasion were exhibited "three entire tape-worms and one lumbricus found at an autopsy." Among clinical cases described was a "hermaphrodite who supposed herself pregnant."

At one of the early meetings of the Society a member narrated a novel treatment adopted at Vienna for "an infant archduke, whom nothing would warm. The doctor got a sow into the room, killed her, opened the carcass, took out the bowels, and sewed the archduke up in the carcass. The treatment was triumphant!"

The volume contains much interesting reading, and shows that the Reading Pathological Society has done much excellent work. It is a beautiful volume, and the Society is under a deep debt of gratitude to its President for the way in which he has executed the work.
Practical Bacteriology, Blood Work and Animal Parasitology, including Bacteriological Keys, Zoological Tables and Explanatory Clinical Notes. By E. R. Stitt, A.B., Ph.G., M.D., Surgeon U.S. Navy, Graduate London School of Tropical Medicine, Instructor in Bacteriology and Tropical Medicine, U.S. Naval School, &c. First Edition. Pp. 294. With 86 Illustrations. London: H. K. Lewis. 1909. Price 6s. 6d. nett.

This book is not a formal treatise, but is rather a set of elaborate and accurate notes on the subjects specified in the title, prepared more immediately for those entering the U.S. Naval Medical Service. The author shows a practical acquaintance with the subjects and with the teaching of them, which is very refreshing. The book contains sections on animal parasites and biting insects, which are concise, clear, and greatly enhance its value. We would very cordially recommend this book to those going in for the various diplomas and certificates in tropical medicine, to those entering the Services, and to those intending to work in the Tropics.

Differential Diagnosis of Bacteria. By E. P. Minett, M.D., D.P.H., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., F.C.S., Assistant Bacteriologist and Demonstrator in Bacteriology and Microscopical Pathology to Guy's Hospital. First Edition. Pp. 72. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1909. Price 2s. 6d. nett.

With the bacteriological facts in this book, so far as they go, with few exceptions we find no fault. But we are entirely at a loss to see how any end is served by its publication. There is great danger that such works might convert a deferential harmless medical practitioner into an ignorant assertive pedant. For students the book is worse than useless. The order of treating the subject is bad; important points are mentioned in an aside: as for difficulties, there appear to be none, and bacteriology seems to be as easy as potato-planting. We do not see our way to recommend this book.

Practical Physiological Chemistry. By Philip B. Hawk, M.S., Ph.D., Professor of Physiological Chemistry in the University of Illinois. Second Edition. Revised and Enlarged. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1909. Price 16s. nett.

Although this book is designed for use in courses dealing with the subject of practical physiological chemistry, it includes so much theoretical matter as to render it rather unsuitable as a students' text-book in practical classes.
The author has taken great pains to render his work not only reliable, but as far as possible complete, and the second edition has been brought well up to date. Quite naturally those methods which have been introduced by American chemists are more frequently referred to than in similar English text-books. Among so much that is excellent, one may be pardoned for drawing attention to the plates of absorption spectra which might with advantage be improved in a later edition. These plates are by no means good, the absorption-bands in nearly all cases being unnecessarily indefinite. Thus, for example, the spectra of alkali hæmatin, carboxyhemoglobin, acid hæmatin in ethereal solution, alkaline hæmatoporphyrin, and urobilin are so ill-defined as to be of very little value for purposes of comparison with solutions of these pigments. Many of the plates of crystals are of great value, notably the reproductions of Professor Reichert’s micro-photographs of oxyhæmoglobin crystals, and also of protein decomposition products, prepared according to Fischer’s method by Dr. Osborne, of New Haven, Conn. It would be impossible in this short review to refer adequately to the numerous and in most cases extremely useful qualitative and quantitative methods described by the author. There is one most useful chapter on the Examination of the Faeces, a subject that is too frequently omitted in laboratory text-books of physiological and pathological chemistry. Six chapters are devoted to the Chemistry of the Urine, which therefore receives very adequate treatment. The quantitative methods employed at present in urinary analyses are described very fully and clearly. It might have been as well to omit certain methods which have been found to be inaccurate—for example, Heintz’s method for estimation of uric acid, and Krüger and Schmidt’s for purin bodies.

Folin’s methods, or his modifications of the methods devised by others, are given more fully than in other similar text-books. Dr. Hawk’s book will prove a most useful guide to workers in laboratories of bio-chemistry. Opinions naturally differ as to what constitutes the best type of laboratory guide. A book that is most valuable to the advanced worker in a laboratory may be quite unsuitable for the ordinary student, and this book appeals more to the former than to the latter.

An Introduction to the Science of Radio-Activity. By CHARLES W. RAFFETY. Pp. 201. With Illustrations. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1909. Price 4s. 6d.

At a time when the King, the laity and the medical profession are exhibiting a renewed interest in radium, the appearance of this book is very opportune. It is divided into three parts: the first part is descriptive, the second treats of the theories of radio-activity, and the third of
practical manipulations and experiments with radio-active bodies. Further, there is an excellent appendix which epitomises our knowledge of the subject. The author is not a medical man, and his book does not touch upon the therapeutic use of radium, but the physiological effect is briefly referred to on p. 13. The subject is approached from the physical aspect, but the treatment is popular, clear and lucid, and frequent references are made to Professor Rutherford’s excellent treatise. The late Professor Becquerel’s discovery of radio-activity is described, for this was the fons et origo of the search for radio-active bodies. Had not Professor Becquerel shown such acumen in rightly interpreting the results of his experiments, the Curies would in all probability have made no examination of pitchblende. Some pages are devoted to the electron theory of electricity and of matter. We were not aware that the X-rays had much effect in causing diamonds to fluoresce: radium rays set up a beautiful fluorescence, and diamonds can be distinguished from other gems in this way. With the X-rays the relative transparency is the best test. It would be well in a future edition to insert a list of the illustrations and to correct the printer’s error at the foot of p. 99: Strutt’s name is not mentioned in connection with the radium clock, nor is it stated that Madame Curie was a student in the late Professor Curie’s laboratory, and that therefore she was working under his guidance and with his assistance. We can cordially recommend this book as an introduction to the subject of radio-activity.

High Frequency Currents. By H. EVELYN CROOK. Second Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1909. Price 7s. 6d. nett.

We have read with pleasure this edition which is brought more up to date. The more recent apparatus is well described, and particularly good are the records of experimental work. Much has still to be learned as to how these currents act, and the literature is so widespread that it is only in books like these that the average reader can overtake it.

Mr. Crooks, like most who specialise, is evidently an optimist, and some of the results are not produced in every case with the uniformity that he describes. Still, optimism is a desirable vice (sic), and, clothed in a nicely finished well-written work, it is still more meritorious.