We hope that the discussion of the subject will lead to further investigations, and that at length some means may be found to reduce the mortality from this most terrible disease.—C. W.

THE ANTI-VIVISECTORS AND THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.—The Victoria Street and International Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection, having failed in their efforts to prevent the incorporation of the Institute, now memorialise the Home Secretary to refuse a vivisection licence "next year and in all future years." The memorial has 46,315 signatures, among whom are 50 medical men. Among these 50 medical men we do not observe any of the first rank. The names include those of 26 peers, 20 peeresses, and 14 bishops, but we entirely fail to see how these august names add any weight to the memorial. We do not think that there is the slightest chance of the licence being refused, and we could wish that the memorialists would expend their energy in a better and nobler cause.

REVIEWS.

The Anatomy of the Central Nervous Organs in Health and in Disease. By Dr. Heinrich Obersteiner, Professor (Ext.) at the University of Vienna. Translated, with Annotations and Additions, by Alexander Hill, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.S., Master of Downing College, Cambridge. With 198 Illustrations. London: Charles Griffin & Co. 1890.

Dr. Obersteiner's work occupies a very high place in German literature, and the profession is indebted to Dr. Hill for the admirable translation which he has made of it. It is seldom that a German work is presented to English readers so free from German idioms and modes of expression.

The anatomy of the nervous system has, within recent years, made much progress, although much still remains to be elucidated. The complexity of structure of the nervous tissues, and the necessity for various special modes of preparation in their examination, readily account for the somewhat backward state of our knowledge of these organs. In this volume, Dr. Obersteiner has given us a guide to the examination of the central nervous organs, and, at the same time, a
very minute and detailed description of their structure, so far as it is at present known.

The first section deals with methods, and describes how to harden, cut, and stain sections, as well as other methods of examination, such as the comparative anatomy method and by physiological experiments. Obersteiner prefers hardening in chromic acid or bichromate solutions, rightly pointing out that long maceration in alcohol destroys certain details of structure. Weigert's and other methods of staining are fully detailed.

Section II treats of the morphology of the central nervous system, and is practically confined to the macroscopic appearances, the external appearance, the various parts and their relations, the convolutions and sulci, &c., as well as the general appearances presented by sections at various levels.

Section III discusses the histological elements of the central nervous system, and deals exhaustively with nerve-fibres and nerve-cells, as well as the vessels, epithelia, and connective tissues entering into the structures.

Section IV is concerned with the minute structure of the spinal cord, that being the simplest part of the great nervous system.

Section V is devoted to the topographical examination of the brain, and the method adopted is the description of numerous sections at different levels.

Section VI, which occupies a greater space than any of the others, and is also more difficult owing to the complexity of the parts, traces the course of the various fibres in the cord and in the brain.

Section VII briefly treats of the cavities of the central nervous system.

An appendix on the rotation of the great brain is added by the translator.

The foregoing summary of the work will have given our readers some idea of the completeness with which it covers the ground of nervous anatomy, but it remains to be added, as one of the distinctive features of this book, that it contains also a statement of pathological conditions, not professing to be exhaustive, but extremely interesting and useful, from its being appended to the anatomical description.

In reading the book, we are constantly wishing we had various preparations and sections of the brain at our hand to follow the author in what is necessarily often a very complex description. In default of such preparations, he has supplied us with numerous admirable illustrations, many of which are
in duplicate, the one being a life-like drawing of the preparation, while the other is a sketch outline with figures indicating the various parts.

Obersteiner recognises that there is a good deal of hypothesis attached to, e.g., the description of the relations of the various sets of nuclei and fibres in the pons, and it is well to point out that he does not seek to dogmatise where there is not good ground for it. He has aimed at presenting his readers with a thorough description of all that is at present known of his subject, and all of which he has confirmed by personal observation. He has followed a plan which makes it comparatively easy to follow him in his investigations, even without having the organs at one's hand for examination. The translator has not only managed to put his work into a good English dress, but he has added numerous annotations which increase the interest and the value of the original. To those of our readers who are interested in the structures and functions of the nervous system, we can recommend this book, but with the proviso that they must be prepared for hard reading, and not enter on its perusal with the idea that in a brief space they will learn all that they want to know about these parts.

The Causes and Prevention of Phthisis: The Milroy Lectures for 1890. By ARTHUR RANSOME, M.D., M.A., F.R.S., Honorary Physician to the Manchester Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Throat. London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1890.

These lectures cover a well-trodden ground, yet they are not devoid of interest. The first is concerned with the pathology and affinities of tubercle, and a close analogy is shown to exist between tubercle and leprosy, the inference being drawn that, as the one has been made to disappear, so may the other in course of time. The various factors entering into the etiology of phthisis are fully discussed—climate, site, malnutrition, overcrowding, heredity, &c., each receiving its due place. With regard to the latter of these, Dr. Ransome practically adopts the view of Niemeyer, that it is a peculiar vulnerability of tissue which is hereditary, and not the disease itself. None of the predisposing causes of phthisis can induce the disease without the introduction of the tubercle bacillus; hence Dr. Ransome clearly lays down the infectiveness of phthisis.

He carefully considers the question of the portals by which
the bacillus gains entrance into the body, and while giving due weight to its infection with tuberculous food and milk, he attaches greatest moment to the entrance of the micro-organism by the air we breathe. The discussion of the development of abdominal tuberculosis from affected food or milk is not gone into, these lectures being on phthisis.

Dr. Ransome's views on prevention are, of course, based on his belief in the infectiveness of the disease. Over and above the usual treatment by sunshine, air, and food, he lays stress on the segregation of the sick, and is in favour of the building of numerous consumption hospitals. The excretions of consumptives should also be carefully disinfected and burned.

Our more definite knowledge of its causation, and the widespread interest in the subject, lead to the hope that by and bye such precautions will be taken as will lead at least to a great diminution in the mortality from tubercular diseases, if not to their extinction as a cause of death.

While these lectures present us with little or nothing that is absolutely novel, they have, as it were, focussed what is known on the subject, and they present the views of a man who is highly competent to express opinions on the questions arising out of this always interesting disease.

Asthma. Considered Specially in Relation to Nasal Disease.

By E. Schmiegelow, M.D., Consulting Physician in Laryngology to the Municipal Hospital, and Director of the Otolaryngological Department in the Polyclinic at Copenhagen.

London: H. K. Lewis. 1890.

This monograph is written to emphasise the connection between asthma and nasal disease, but we must give the author the credit of not having ridden his hobby too hard.

He begins with an interesting historic review of the theories of asthma, in the course of which it is made apparent that he accepts as best that of Germain Sée, which may be briefly stated as regarding asthma as a neurosis of the respiratory centre in the medulla oblongata, capable of being excited through various reflex channels. Hack's views as to the importance of the nasal cavities as a centre of this irritation receive due prominence and discussion.

A summary is given of 71 cases of nasal disease associated with genuine or pseudo-asthma, treated by the author. These were culled from a total of nasal diseases, as follows:—139 cases of nasal polypi, of which 31 had asthma, and 514 cases
of chronic rhinitis, of which 40 had asthma. After excluding 21 cases for various causes, he finds that of the remaining 50, 32 cases were cured, 11 were improved, while 7 gave no result whatever, by treatment of the nasal disease.

Schmiegelow takes up the position that in all cases of asthma the nasal cavities should be explored, and when a lesion is found there of such a nature as to suggest a probable connection between the two affections, the patient should be put under competent treatment. By this latter, we presume he means a specialist, as he dismisses the subject of treatment very summarily, without any details.

The little volume contains many proofs that it is the work of a foreigner; but Dr. Schmiegelow must be congratulated on the facility with which he writes English.

Varicocele. By W. H. Bennett, F.R.C.S. London: Longmans. 1891.

Mr. Bennett's monograph on varicose veins is already well known, and his studies on that subject have led to a consideration of the nearly allied subject of varicocele. The author's personal observations include about 250 cases, but the incidence of the affection has been studied upon a wider basis of statistics, obtained from various sources, including those furnished by the examination of recruits for the army over a period of ten years.

The salient points of Mr Bennett's thesis are his views as to aetiology, as to the selection of cases for operation, and the special form of operation which he recommends.

To mechanical causes he attributes little importance, and that only secondary, as aggravating a condition which is of congenital or developmental origin. Cases are recorded in early childhood, and dissections have even found the essentials of the condition in the foetus. Its relation to wide-spread anomalies of the venous system has been shown; the veins themselves are nowise in a state of simple dilatation as from pressure, but are thicker walled than normal, and gape on section. Further, the frequent onset or aggravation of symptoms at puberty is not explained merely upon the ground of the increased attention of which the parts may then be the object, but rather upon the ground of participation by the veins in the heightened formative activity of the testicle at that period. With reference to increase of the varicocele at later periods, this would seem to be related more to condi-
tions of engorgement of the portal system than to any other cause. The possibility of any influence being exerted by a loaded colon, in the way of actual pressure, the author holds to be undemonstrable. The relation of the spermatic veins to the mesenteries being principally, if not entirely, confined to the left side, serves to throw some light on the greater frequency with which the condition becomes aggravated on the left side. Two principal varieties are recognised, the large veined and the small veined type. It is the latter which is apt to be associated with imperfectly developed testicle and with rapid growth at various periods and under special circumstances.

With regard to the benefits to be obtained from operation, Mr. Bennett's views are encouraging. They are clearly stated and supported by cases observed over considerable periods. His mode of operating involves the removal, along with a mass of the venous column, of a portion of the spermatic artery; but this procedure he holds, "if the ordinary rules of surgical cleanliness be observed, is not only harmless to the testicle, but aids in the ultimate relief of the affection by diminishing the pressure of blood going to the testis at the time when almost all the returning veins are suddenly obliterated." The risk of sloughing or atrophy of the organ is in sepsis and inflammatory "choking" of the collateral circulation.

Mr. Bennett has given us a careful enquiry into the subject of varicocele, and his book will, we doubt not, be found of much assistance by those who are concerned in the treatment of the condition.

Lectures at St. Peter's (in 1890) on some Urinary Disorders connected with the Bladder, Prostate, and Urethra. By Reginald Harrison, F.R.C.S., one of the Surgeons to the Hospital; Hunterian Professor of Pathology and Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1890.

These six lectures cover ground which has in great part been already gone over by the author in previous works. They are part of a clinical course, and contain matter of much general interest, discussing, as they do, the prevention and early treatment of prostatic obstruction, the operative treatment of advanced forms of prostatic obstruction, points in the therapeutics and hygiene of the bladder, haematuria, and the early treatment and detection of stone in the bladder, &c.
Meetings of Societies.

The author's wide experience qualifies him to treat of these subjects in such a way as to throw much light on them. If, however, the lectures were worth publishing, as we believe they are, it must have been equally worth while to put them in a proper form. But the absence of careful revision is visible in almost every page in the form of grammatical errors, &c., which are a source of considerable irritation to the reader.

Practical Manual of Diseases of Women and Uterine Therapeutics, for Students and Practitioners. By H. MacNaughton Jones, M.D., M.Ch., M.A.O. (Hon. Caus.), F.R.C.S., I. & E. Fifth Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1891.

It is but little more than a year since we reviewed the former edition of this book, and there are no changes in this edition which call for special remark. The fact that a new edition has been found necessary after such a short interval may be taken as sufficient proof of public favour. The publishers have spared no pains to give the book an attractive form.

MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES.

MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF GLASGOW.

SESSION 1891-92.

MEETING II.—6TH NOVEMBER, 1891.

The President, Dr. Joseph Coats, in the Chair.

DISCUSSION ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

This meeting was devoted to a discussion of Dr. Coats's recent address on "The Spontaneous Healing of Tuberculosis: Its Frequency and the Mode of its Occurrence." Dr. Coats, who presided, announced that it was proposed to hold a further discussion on "Tuberculosis as an Infectious Disease," later in the session.