REVIEWS OF
BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE.

Obstetrics: A Text-book for the Use of Students and Practitioners. By Professor J. Whitridge Williams. Second Edition. London: Sidney Appleton & Co.

In the light of present knowledge, it is difficult to imagine a better guide to the science and practice of midwifery than is found in Williams' "Obstetrics." The book is certainly unsurpassed, and it is doubtful if it is equalled in merit by any other text-book on the subject. The second edition indicates careful and thorough revision, and important changes have been made. The chapters on the "Development of the Ovum" and upon the "Toxaemias of Pregnancy" have been entirely rewritten, and sections have been added on the "Metabolism of Normal Pregnancy," "Vaginal Cesarean Section," "Pubiotomy," and "Contractions of the Pelvic Outlet."

The chapter on the "Toxaemias" is an excellent one, in which Dr. Williams discusses fully the entire subject, and gives his reasons for including various supposed diseases of pregnancy among the toxemias. He is careful to point out that one must be cautious in accepting new theories, as the fact is that we are just beginning to realise our profound ignorance of the subject.

In cases where rapid delivery is called for before the os uteri is dilated, Dr. Williams considers that vaginal Cesarean section is the ideal method. He condemns Bossi's dilator as a most dangerous instrument, and one likely to lead to deep cervical tears, while Dührrensen's cervical incisions are also strongly disapproved of.

All British obstetricians will not endorse Williams' emphatic advocacy of pubiotomy. He repeats the arguments in support of this operation which, though some condemn both operations, is more favourably considered than symphysiotomy. In pubiotomy there is less risk to the bladder and the urethra, and better union and a more rapid convalescence are ensured. The author considers that pubiotomy will displace Cesarean section in the so-called "border line" cases, as it enables one to subject the patient to the test of labour and to operate after several hours of second stage pains have demonstrated that the head cannot pass through the superior strait. He believes, too, that pubiotomy will narrow the field for the induction of premature labour, and do away with the use of high forceps, version or craniotomy, in moderate degrees of contracted pelvis when the mother is in good condition. He says it is also indicated in certain cases of funnel-shaped pelvis, and possibly in face presentation when the chin has rotated into the hollow of the sacrum. Many obstetricians would not so extend the list of indications for this operation, and it is certain that in this country the induction of
premature labour and, though less frequently, craniotomy will continue to be the operations of election in certain cases.

The bacteriology, the causes and treatment of septic fever in its various puerperal forms, are fully discussed in an excellent chapter. The author does not find that serum therapy has proved more satisfactory than other methods of treatment. The cases in which curettage and intra-uterine douching—methods somewhat apt to be overdone—will prove beneficial, are clearly pointed out, and the risks of these minor operations in many cases are strongly insisted upon.

In this edition many of the old illustrations have been replaced and a number of new ones added. They are all well chosen and reproduced.

The style of the whole work is clear and original.

The Essentials of Cytology. By C. E. Walker, Assistant Director of the Cancer Research, Liverpool. London: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd.

This is really an epitome of the intricate subject of cell-division. The title of the volume is a trifle misleading, as only some seventeen or eighteen out of a total of 130 pages are devoted to the subject of general cytology, and consist of an elementary and rather incomplete description of cell structure. By far the greater part of the book is taken up with the description of the varieties of cell-division, special attention being given to that occurring in gametogenetic cells. On p. 20, we note that the author gives the usual division of the phenomena of ordinary mitosis, namely, prophase, metaphase, anaphase, and telophase; but in his detailed description of these processes we are unable to find any further mention of the second and most important, the metaphase or division of the chromosomes, the inaccurate statement being made that the splitting of the chromosomes "is the commencement of the anaphase." Other minor inaccuracies somewhat detract from the value of the descriptions given. When the author passes on to discuss some of the highly controversial problems of heterotype and homotype mitosis, those errors which we have pointed out as occurring in the more elementary part of the book rather tend to shake the confidence of the reader when he comes to peruse the chapters in which the author proceeds to deal with the more complex phenomena of mitosis and allied processes in gametogenetic cells. For the period during which reduction of the chromosomes is occurring, he suggests the useful name "meiotic" phase—from which there can be derived the other equally useful descriptive terms "pre-meiotic" and "post-meiotic"—a suggestion which may help to abolish the unfortunate and confusing terms "heterotype" and "homotype mitosis" which have been introduced in this connection.

The ambiguity produced by the somewhat sparing use of commas in the text often renders it necessary for the reader to go back and re-read some passages in order to grasp the meaning intended to be conveyed. The usual idea that "the greater includes the less" seems to be controverted by the wording of the sentence found on p. 53: "In mammals, in many if not in all vertebrates, in some Arthropods, Mollusca, etc. We do not, however, wish altogether to take up the position of the
Practical Diagnosis. By Robert Amory Hare, M.D. Sixth Edition. London: Henry Kimpton.

The character of this book is clearly enough indicated by the sub-title—"The Use of Symptoms and Physical Signs in the Diagnosis of Disease." It is a clinical manual in which prominence is given to what are conventionally known as "physical signs," including under the term physiognomy, gait, temperature, and the like, and to some extent subjective symptoms, while clinical chemistry and pathology are relegated to the background, or, at least so far as purely laboratory methods are concerned, left entirely out of consideration. The subject-matter is arranged regionally; signs connected with the facies, the limbs, the mouth, thorax, abdomen, pulse, faeces, urine, etc., being considered in turn, and thereafter the significance of such important phenomena as fever, headache, pain, convulsions, coma, and so on, inquired into. By pursuing this method the whole range of medicine is covered, and this in an eminently thorough and practical way. As might be expected from one of Dr. Hare's reputation, the volume is singularly free from the blemishes which are often found in books of this description; we refer particularly to faulty appreciation of the relative diagnostic importance of symptoms in different diseases. Dr. Hare's experience enables him to avoid this kind of error, and we congratulate him on the appearance of a sixth edition of his treatise.

In reading the book, one or two criticisms occurred to us. Among joint affections, syphilitic synovitis is not mentioned, yet its characters are well defined and almost pathognomonic. The examination of the Achilles jerk ought to be referred to in future editions. Among passages which would stand revision is one concerning cyanosis (p. 138), from which the unwary might infer that patent foramen ovale is, if not the only, at least the chief cause of cyanosis in the newly born. It is very doubtful whether thickening of the vessel wall is so negligible an affair in sphygmanometry as is stated on p. 273. For the detection of occult hæmorrhages the aloin turpentine test is recommended; should some of the more recent and delicate reactions (e.g., the benzedin test) not have been preferred? Dr. Hare quotes a statement that clear cerebro-spinal fluid excludes all inflammatory conditions of the meninges except tubercle; as a matter of fact, the fluid is very often quite translucent in post-basic meningitis. The method of estimating the red blood cor-
puscles by the haemocrit might well have been omitted; it is inaccurate, and has never found a place in serious work. The book is well illustrated with original and borrowed plates. There is surely, however, a mistake in the description of that on p. 555 as "the normal Babinski reflex in health." These criticisms must not be taken as detracting from the value of the book. Rather do we submit them to the author in view of future editions.

A Text-book of Physiology. By Isaac Ott, A.M., M.D. Second Edition. Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company.

The second edition of this text-book is a bulky volume. It has been enlarged by the addition of 240 pages, and much new matter has been inserted, but in its arrangement the original plan has been adhered to. The author tells us that his aim was to write, not a treatise, but an elementary work containing the main facts of physiology which it is necessary for the student of medicine to know. In our opinion it cannot be said that he has succeeded in his object. The book contains so many mistakes on fundamental points that it is entirely unsuited for beginners, but might be read by those who already know the subject and are in a position to sift the grain from the chaff.

On p. 95, e.g., we are told that the islets of Langerhans and the centro-acinar cells are alternative names for the same structures. On p. 54 it is stated that "the duct of the parotid called Stenos has the diameter of a crow quill." The reader is left in doubt as to whether it is the duct or the parotid that is called Stenos. The chapter on the anatomy and physiology of the nervous system is particularly weak. In tracing upwards the fibres of the columns of Goll, the author says they "ascend to the medulla, where they pass without decussation into the post-pyramidal nucleus or nucleus of Goll. By this nucleus it is carried into the cerebellum following part of the restiform body; another part is placed in relation with the nuclei of the pons." No mention is made of their main connection with the great sensory tract, the fillet, and the student is left to infer, if he can take any meaning out of the above statement at all, that they end in the cerebellum and pons. On p. 564 the descending nucleus of the fifth nerve is described as giving origin to the trigeminus. The sensory (afferent) nerves are nearly always referred to as sensitive nerves.

The book, however, is not without its merits. The introduction to the chapter on reproduction is excellent. It is not a work that is likely to take a high place amongst American text-books of physiology.

Electro-Therapeutics and Röntgen Rays. By M. K. Kassabian. London: J. B. Lippincott Co.

It is, we fancy, impossible for one man to keep thoroughly up to date on all branches of his subject, and electro-therapeutics has many branches, but Dr. Kassabian has made an earnest endeavour to do so. Perhaps the most personal and therefore strongest parts of the book are those dealing with "Galvanism," "Faradism," and "X-Rays." Other
parts are good, but there is more hearsay evidence, some of which is already controverted by more recent experience.

The study of X-rays occupies three-fourths of the volume, and the parts dealing with their use in clinical diagnosis is specially to be recommended. The author has devised several head-sets for the localisation of disease or foreign bodies in all parts of the cranium, and these as well as many other forms of apparatus are fully described. We are pleased to see that he lays stress on proper arrangements for negative viewing, which is too often loosely carried out.

The tabulated lists to guide in photographing different parts are very useful, and these, with the accounts of experiments and the valuable series of bone photographs, are all written by one who evidently knows, and, furthermore, can impart his knowledge clearly.

The very encouraging results with X-rays and high frequency in the case of epileptics is of great interest. In conclusion, we may state that the text is good, the meaning lucidly conveyed, and that there is a commendable terseness which is agreeable without being dull.

Studies in Blood Pressure. By George Oliver, M.D. (Lond.). Second Edition. London: H. K. Lewis.

Although it still remains of modest dimensions, the second edition of Dr. Oliver's brochure has undergone considerable amplification through the incorporation of new material and fresh observations. The author's ingenuity in devising new methods of clinical research finds expression in these pages, and his descriptions of the various instruments bearing his name, along with the very precise instructions and cautions given concerning their use, are not the least valuable parts of the book. He appears to hold very much the same views as Dr. Russell on the value of hæmanometric readings when the vessels are thickened, and shows very clearly how unreliable "armlet" methods alone are under these circumstances. His observations seem to indicate that we may find an easy means of checking this source of error by comparing the "armlet" readings with those made at the radial artery with the hæmodyanometer. A very simple and ingenious method of estimating the venous pressure without special appliances finds mention. The physiology and pathology of blood pressure are discussed at some length, and, considering the complexity of the subject, with commendable simplicity. A praiseworthy feature of the book is the ample space—nearly a quarter of the pages—given to treatment. The dietary in high pressure is not unlike that advised by Russell. Dechlorination (by the way, the French word is "déchloruration" not "déchlorisation," as in the footnote, p. 179) is advised as worthy of trial, and it is suggested that by modifying the salts of the plasma we may be able to secure the desired reduction of blood pressure. We are reminded, however, that high blood pressure is sometimes the price paid for circulatory efficiency, and that it is not always advisable to attempt to remove what may be compensatory, and a defensive mechanism. Dr. Oliver's book may be heartily commended as a readable and instructive treatise.
A Manual of Prescribing. By C. R. Marshall, M.D. London: J. & A. Churchill.

A new book on prescribing cannot be expected to differ very materially from those already in the field, nevertheless Dr. Marshall's manual seems to us to be in many ways superior to most of its competitors. There are signs that a reaction is beginning to set in against the baneful practice of indiscriminately and uncritically prescribing proprietary formulæ, and that it is being recognised that equally attractive preparations can be ordered and dispensed with due regard to the special needs of individual patients. It is very desirable that the custom should be fostered, and such a book as Dr. Marshall's is eminently adapted to do this. Although in his preface he disclaims having written a treatise on the art of dispensing, he devotes a chapter to the subject, and really deals with it more fully than most authors. This, we think, will be found a very profitable part of the book, because, however little prospect a reader has of himself compounding pills, emulsions, or mixtures, he is all the better of knowing something about the difficulties and methods of dispensing. Useful information of a similar nature is given in the chapter on the forms of medicines. The section on incompatibility is ample for all practical purposes, and the illustrative formulæ with which the text is interspersed are well selected. Altogether, Dr. Marshall's book is very interesting: it is neither large nor expensive, and ought to be in the hands of every medical student.

Protozoa and Disease, comprising Sections on the Causation of Smallpox, Syphilis, and Cancer. Part II. By J. Jackson Clarke. London: Baillière, Tindall, & Cox.

Nearly one-half of this volume is devoted to a consideration of the various bodies found in the cells of human cancers and the infective granular tumours of dogs, both of which diseases, according to the author, are caused by more or less local infection by Protozoa, and differ from each other only in the more intimate character of the parasitism and the more complicated life-history in the case of cancer. Although the author, with considerable assurance, regards the bodies above mentioned as parasitic Protozoa, and suggests that some of them resemble Suctoria, owing to their possession of structures like knobbed tentacles, the impression in the mind of the reader is that some of these bodies are capable of interpretation as degenerate nuclear products, and the nature of the others must, it seems to us, be still considered to be highly problematical. The occurrence of the same "parasitic" bodies (for instance, Plimmer's bodies) in both syphilis and cancer calls for explanation in view of the improbability that (assuming cancer to be due to a parasite) two such widely different diseases can have one and the same causal organism. The author supports Calkins' view of the protozoan nature of the Guarnieri bodies of smallpox and vaccinia, and also attributes to the presence of protozoan parasites certain cysts found in cystic disease of the urinary tract. There are fragmentary notes on some tropical diseases—trypanosomiasis, Kala-azar, amöbic dysentery—and on piroplasmosis and ticks. In the notes on ticks we
observe the misstatement that *Boophilus bovis* has been renamed by Pocock *Alectorobius*, and that it belongs to the *Argas* family, whereas Pocock renamed it *Margaropus*, but left it, where it ought to be, in the family Ixodidae. The genus *Glossina* is not limited to Africa, as stated on p. 29, for *G. tachinoides* was recorded from Arabia in 1906.

*The Functional Inertia of Living Matter.* By David Fraser Harris, M.D., B.Sc. (Lond.), F.R.S.E. London: J. & A. Churchill.

In a small volume of 128 pages, Dr. Fraser Harris describes, as a property of living matter, a physiological counterpart of "irritability," to which he gives the name "functional inertia." Life, he considers, is the result of the simultaneous possession of and due co-ordination between these two primary properties, and the phenomena of vitality cannot be adequately conceived in terms of one or other alone. The property with which living matter is thus endowed is the fundamental principle underlying many of the phenomena exhibited by the organism as a whole and in its several parts. It explains the latent period which elapses between stimulation and response in the various tissues of the body; it is at the root of the various rhythms, respiratory, vasomotor, the tremors of muscles and even of habits such as the daily evacuation of the rectum at a certain hour; it is seen in the periodicity of hemicrania, menstruation in the female, fits of irritability in the male, and is the cause of the sleeplessness often experienced by nurses who have been changed from night duty to day duty. Many of the problems of heredity, the maintenance of the ancestral character, atavism, and hereditary tendencies, are the expressions of functional inertia. To it we owe the assertion of genius, the inspiration of Shakespeare, the rise of Napoleon, the art of Michael Angelo, the music of Schubert,—the appearance, indeed, of all the great figures in the world's history. National characteristics are explained on the same grounds; functional inertia decrees the rise and fall of Eastern nations and the stationary position of China; it explains the constancy in the number of suicides and of umbrellas left in trains every year; it even stands in the way of female suffrage, because "the majority of Radical politicians hesitate to grant the parliamentary suffrage to women, on the ground that, in virtue of this very mental characteristic, they would almost certainly vote on 'Conservative lines.'"

In support of his argument, Dr. Fraser Harris quotes from the writings of many distinguished men who have made use of the term "inertia," or an expression equivalent to it, in connection with living material. They make a formidable list, but whether they would agree with the construction put upon their observations or not, is at least open to doubt. The book shows evidence of much care in preparation; the argument, however, is far from convincing, and is at times extremely fanciful. The author would have made a better case if he had not traversed so wide a field.