The Theory and Practice of Medicine. By Frederick T. Roberts, M.D. Ninth Edition. London: H. K. Lewis. 1894.

We have pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to the appearance of the ninth edition of this well-known textbook. In the present issue the subject of bacteriology has received special attention, and new sections dealing with the general therapeutics of the principal systems and organs of the body have been added. It is time, however, that the error of stating that cancer is the most common form of solid tumour of the mediastinum should be eliminated.

The Dyspepsia of Phthisis: its Varieties and Treatment, including a Description of Certain Forms of Dyspepsia associated with the Tubercular Diathesis. By W. Soltau Fenwick, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis.

This book is a most readable one, and we have pleasure in recommending it as likely to prove of much service to the general practitioner. The observations, upon which its conclusions are based, were made in great part in the Brompton Hospital forConsumption, and were directed so as to connect clinical data with the results of post-mortem investigation. With regard to the gastric symptoms so often noted during the course of phthisis, it seems to be established that in the initial stages of the pulmonary disease the dyspepsia is purely functional, whereas in the stage of excavation there is present a chronic gastro-intestinal catarrh. Woodcuts illustrative of the latter condition are given, and the theory of its etiology, which is adopted, is that it is "probably due to the chronic absorption of certain toxic substances which are manufactured in the pulmonary cavities." At the post-mortem attention has also been directed to such changes as dilatation of the stomach, post-mortem digestion, lardaceous disease of the stomach, and tubercular ulceration of the stomach. The author agrees with other writers as to the extreme rarity of the last-mentioned lesion.

One important point in reference to the initial dyspepsia is, very properly, strongly insisted upon—viz., the fact that it may constitute the sole symptom of the (actually present) pulmonary disease. This is specially likely to be the case among patients who are ignorant and unobservant, and many mistakes in diagnosis might be avoided if all adopted Dr.
Fenwick’s rule “that, in every case of severe dyspepsia, especially if it be associated with weakness, loss of flesh, or antipathy to fat (food), a thorough examination of the chest should be made, and that the state of the respiratory system should be the subject of repeated investigation during the whole course of the disorder.”

A chapter is devoted to dyspepsia preceding phthisis. This form of dyspepsia is considered to be specially common among those with a predisposition to tubercular disease, and the lowering of the general health resulting from the gastric disturbance is held to lessen resisting power, and thus lay the patient open to attack. It may be remarked, however, that in the description of the atonic variety of this “preceding dyspepsia” it is mentioned that the subjects of it are usually females from 13 to 25 years of age, and that they are anæmic. Details as to the examination of the blood would have been useful here, to determine whether chlorosis may not be the important factor in the etiology of the dyspepsia, and of the depreciation of general health.

Another section, which we would venture to criticise, is that dealing with the relative frequency of perforation from tubercular and from typhoid ulceration of the bowel. Dr. Fenwick controverts the usual statement as to the latter being the more common, but we fear that there are loop-holes in his argument. Thus, while he distinguishes partial and complete perforation from tubercular ulceration, he does not do so for the other; so far as we have seen, he takes no account of the cases of tubercular disease of the lungs which recover; and the proportion of cases of perforation (complete) which he mentions for enteric fever is not nearly so high as that given in Murchison’s classical work. This question of relative frequency is, however, but a side issue. The main arguments of the book are carefully elaborated, and copious references are given to the literature of the subject. We would thus give the volume a very hearty recommendation.

The Senile Heart: Its Symptoms, Sequelæ, and Treatment:
By George William Balfour, M.D. St. And.; LL.D. Ed.
London: Adam and Charles Black. 1894.

To write a work on some medical topic is for the young, and therefore unknown practitioner, the order of the day. He finds, without any difficulty, a publisher who will publish anything if he is paid for it. It needs money to do it well; for long-continued advertising in the medical journals is