NEW BOOKS.

The Thyroid Gland in Health and Disease. By Robert McGarrison, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P.(Lond.). Pp. ix. + 286. With 82 Illustrations. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1917.

The purpose of this most excellent volume is to present to the reader a connected account of the functions of the thyroid and parathyroid glands and of the disorders to which these structures are liable. The book is in reality designed to embody the results of years of careful and painstaking study—experimental, pathological, and clinical—into the whole subject. As was natural in an officer of the Indian Medical Service, the author’s attention was at first directed to the epidemiological side of the problem, with the result that certain facts emerged suggesting strongly that the origin of many thyroid disorders was toxic in its nature. His further investigations lead him to the conclusion that the toxins which so act are of gastro-intestinal origin.

One of the most interesting chapters in a wholly interesting book is that dealing with the effects of intestinal toxæmia in the production of thyroid lesions. These act, the author holds, (1) by interfering with the normal synthesis of the thyroid secretion, and (2) by producing a condition of chronic toxic inflammation in the gland. These con-
elusions are supported (in Appendix II.) by the detailed results of treatment in fifty-seven cases of goitre by means of intestinal antiseptics.

In the latter half of the book excellent descriptions are given of the various disorders of the thyroid and parathyroid glands. The sections which deal with treatment are specially noteworthy, but indeed the whole book is one which ought to be read carefully by all who are interested in the clinical and pathological aspects of endocrine disease.

A Handbook of Practical Treatment. Edited by T. H. Musser and T. C. Kelly. Vol. IV. Pp. 1000. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Co.

The treatment of disease is essentially progressive, and published volumes are soon out of date. This volume of practical treatment takes the place of one published a year or two ago, and brings up to date articles on various subjects which recent investigations have rendered incomplete. It is a compilation by numerous authors—each a specialist in his own subject—all of them American, with the exception of Sir Clifford Allbutt and the late Sir Lauder Brunton. Various surgeons have also contributed in those conditions which, usually medical, often necessitate surgical interference. The editors on the covering call the volume "The newest treatment," and the contents readily bear this out.

One finds in the volume, for example, the latest results of splenectomy in pernicious anæmia; a full description of specific therapy in pneumonia, with the results obtained by the use of operation and serum therapy; an excellent chapter on recent treatment of typhoid and syphilis, and the latest records of the treatment of the various degrees of intestinal stasis. The various diseases are discussed under their particular system, there is no overlapping, and methods of treatment are simply described and readily understood. Symptomatology and diagnosis are but briefly touched upon, and the attention is not overburdened with discussions on treatments which have had their day but are no longer efficacious. This volume will undoubtedly form an important work of reference for practitioners who desire to keep themselves abreast of the newest methods of treatment of disease.

The Indian Operation of Couching for Cataract. By Lieut.-Col. R. H. Elliot, I.M.S. (Retired), M.D., F.R.C.S. Pp. xii. + 94. Illustrated. Price 7s. net.

This interesting monograph will be appreciated by ophthalmic surgeons, and especially by officers of the Indian Medical Service. The history of couching, the technique of the operation, and the habits of the Indian coucher are discussed in the first three chapters. The difference between couching and reclination is pointed out, and the author throws an interesting light upon the psychology of the coucher and of his
patients. The fourth chapter gives the results of an analysis of 780 cases. It would appear that only about 20 per cent. of the native results can be considered to be comparatively successful, and it is noteworthy that Punjabi couchers are more successful than their Mahomedan confrères of the south. The pathological anatomy of couched eyes, as contained in the Hunterian Lectures for 1917, forms the subject of the fifth and longest section of the work. It is illustrated by six plates of excellent photographs, both of macroscopic and of microscopic specimens. Chapter VI. deals with diagnosis. The problems are, firstly, to ascertain whether the operation of couching has been performed; secondly, the position of the lens and its condition; and, lastly, to decide whether further interference is advisable. Extraction of the lens is most strongly indicated in those cases in which the lens is dislocated but mobile, and obstructs vision by falling across the pupil. In this connection the author emphasises the necessity of avoiding damage to the reputation of Western surgery by too freely undertaking operative measures which are fraught with considerable risk, as interference with a dislocated lens so often is. A final short clinical chapter deals with the pain following couching, both immediately and later, and with some of the rarer accidents which may occur.

The work is interestingly written, well illustrated, and the print and paper are pleasant to the eye. A useful index and bibliography are provided.

Experimental Pharmacology. By DENNIS E. JACKSON, Ph.D., M.D., Associate Professor of Pharmacology, Washington University Medical School, St. Louis. Pp. 536. With 414 Illustrations. London: Henry Kimpton. 1917. Price 20s. net.

The author of this book, intended for medical students, remarks that the subject is for them but poorly developed, though one of the most valuable and interesting of all medical subjects. He has greatly assisted in the development of the subject by the publication of this book, and it should find its place in the library of every teacher of pharmacology. He describes and illustrates the laboratory arrangements, tools, appliances, and apparatus which have been found of most utility, and describes and illustrates, with marked success, the various stages in the surgical operations necessary for each experiment.

So far as the experimental side of the subject is concerned, we have nothing but praise for the manner in which the subject is presented. With regard to the pharmacology, there must be obviously made a rigorous selection from the 168 experiments, some of which last three or four hours, and we think that the practice of administering several substances in succession in one experiment open to grave objection on the ground of confusion of action and difficulty of analysis. We also think that the question of dosage, which in pharmacology is all-important, does not receive enough consideration and comparison with
therapeutic quantities. Thus in experiment 18 there is no indication that the dose employed is large, and that if ten drops of the solution were applied to the heart that it would be equivalent to something like three ounces of chloral hydrate applied to the human heart, and that this has little bearing on effects produced with medicinal doses.

Where such care and elaboration of experimental method is shown in many experiments it is surprising to find so primitive and inaccurate a method of perfusing the blood-vessels of the frog with no attempt to keep the perfusing fluid under constant pressure.

The merits of the book largely outweigh its imperfections, and if students in this country had the time to perform some of these experiments they would no doubt have a more definite knowledge of pharmacology than many of them now possess.

The Practitioner's Pocket Pharmacology and Formulary. By L. Freyberger, M.D., M.R.C.P. Pp. 545. London: William Heinemann. 1917. Price 12s. 6d. net.

This is an elegant volume of handy size, and stated to be a compilation of the official remedies of Great Britain and the U.S.A., with some non-official remedies of tried and established value. It is not easy to understand why the volume has been written, for a great deal of labour must have been spent in what is really a recapitulation of the B.P. and U.S.A. remedies. It does not supply a tithe of the information so well presented in Martindale and Westcott's book, nor does it pretend to be an exhaustive reference work to all the drugs in all the pharmacopoeias, such as has been so well done by Ewald and Heffter in their Handbuch der Arzneiverordnungslehre. The book may be found useful to the busy man who wishes to look up a remedy or to find some suitable drug for a change of treatment, but the information supplied is not exhaustive by any means.

Lessons in Pharmaceutical Latin and Prescription Writing and Interpretation.
By Hugh Muldoon, Ph.G. Pp. vii. + 173. New York: John Wiley & Sons. London: Chapman & Hall. 1916. Price 6s. net

This little book is intended for the instruction of the pharmacist in the Latin of prescription writing, and in the twenty-five lessons into which it is divided covers the ground very completely. It is, of course, curious to teach a language with reference to only one use of it, but it does not seem to us clearer to explain the genitive case as a limiting case, instead of the case of the genus or kind. We are not aware of the substantive "semis" being used as an adjective, and if there is such a use, it is unnecessarily confusing, and need not be mentioned. O.K. and Q.R. (quantum rectum) are scholastic jests rather than legitimate abbreviations, but these are minor defects in a little book very complete for its purpose.