NEW EDITIONS.

The Alimentary Tract: A Radiographic Study. By Alfred E. Barclay. Second Edition. Pp. 169. With 77 Illustrations. London: Sherrat & Hughes. 1915. Price 15s. net.

Whilst appearing under a new title—adopted to include the wider field covered by it—this valuable contribution is, in fact, a revised and enlarged edition of a volume entitled The Stomach and Oesophagus, published by Dr. Barclay in 1913, which must be familiar to many of our readers.

In the present edition the whole of the alimentary tract is dealt with, though, as might be expected, the greater part of the book is devoted to the consideration of the stomach and duodenum.

In the opening pages the technique of the opaque meal and radiographic method of examination, as practised by Dr. Barclay, is clearly and carefully explained, and this section should prove useful to those who are beginning this line of work. We are surprised, however, to find that Dr. Barclay depends almost entirely on his observations with the screen for the conclusions he draws. "Pretty pictures" are not everything, we admit, but we do think that the best results can only be obtained by a combined radioscopic and radiographic examination; in stout people particularly, in whom we are more likely to find indications of early disease, and in whom screen examinations are most disappointing, a series of plates is of the greatest value, and, in addition, we think that both the patient and the surgeon have a right to expect some more tangible guide than a mere description of what has been seen by the radiologist, and this can, in the majority of cases, be supplied in the form of a plate or plates.

In the succeeding chapters the oesophagus and stomach are very carefully considered, and many important questions, such as the causation of gastric ulcer and "hour-glass" stomach, both organic and spasmodic, are dealt with in so interesting and lucid a manner, that we look forward to meeting such cases in the future, armed with many fresh ideas, for Dr. Barclay does not content himself with a narrative of what he has seen, but propounds theories which sound as if they must be right, and in all probability are right. The chapter on the large intestine has admittedly been put together somewhat hurriedly, but is none the less well worth careful study. With regard to constipation, in our experience caecal stasis has been a much more frequent cause than rectal stasis or dyscrasia; the reverse, however, has been the case in the author's experience.

Dr. Barclay finds occasion to protest strongly against the "wholesale removals" of the large intestine, but we are glad to say that we have noticed no tendency on the part of surgeons to adopt these
measures without most careful consideration and with a due sense of responsibility. Many of the caeca we have seen removed were positively crying out for removal, and were certainly very different in appearance and structure and, judging from the clinical history, in function from what they were meant to be by the “Great Architect” when He laid down the original plan.

The volume concludes with a useful Table of Cases, which gives the clinical diagnosis, the X-ray findings, and the operative findings, which should prove useful; a complete bibliography, and, we are glad to say, an index.

We heartily recommend this book to all who are interested in the subject it deals with, and we would, in conclusion, offer a word of praise to the publishers who have placed in our hands a book which is pleasant to read, one in which the illustrations are very good indeed, and which is marvellously cheap.

Clinical Diagnosis: A Manual of Laboratory Methods. By J. C. Todd, Ph.B., M.D. Third Edition. Revised and enlarged. Pp. 585. With 209 Illustrations. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Co.

This book is devoted to the more important laboratory methods which have clinical value. An introductory chapter dealing with the use of the microscope deserves special mention.

In a recent address to the Royal Microscopical Society Professor Sims Woodhead said that “if we could only turn some 20 or 30 of our members into the various medical schools of the kingdom” to instruct in the finer working of the modern microscope, “the rate of medical knowledge would be enormously speeded up.” Certainly, when one thinks of the disregard of many of the simplest principles of microscopy constantly to be seen in hospital side-rooms and even in research laboratories, one cannot but feel how much instruction such as Dr. Todd gives in his introductory chapter is called for as an essential part of the medical student’s curriculum. Most things of importance in the manipulation of the microscope are here carefully and clearly explained. The entire dependence of the microscopic image on the aperture as distinct from the mere magnifying power of the objective, and the consequent uselessness of mere “empty magnification,” is well brought before the student’s mind. Abbe’s formula for the limits of useful eye-piece magnification is given. The importance of maintaining correct tube length—a subject which receives surprising neglect in laboratories—is fully explained; as is also the effect of variations in cover-glass thickness and the means for their correction. The proper use of the iris diaphragm and of central oblique and dark-ground illumination is explained on a rational basis. One cannot agree with the recommendation to use the concave side of the mirror when
working with an immersion lens and artificial light; and among the various illuminants one would like to put in a plea for mention of the oil lamp. For much of the highest kind of critical work with immersion lenses and modern condensors the edge of an oil lamp flame still possesses many advantages of its own. Instructions are given for obtaining critical light, and the importance of centring the condensor is insisted on; but as no mention is made of the distinction between the total aperture of the condensor and its aplanatic aperture, the student will scarcely understand the formation of a "critical image," as that term has always been employed by leading English writers on the microscope. As he is told that the condensor should have an N.A. equal to that of the objective, he might readily suppose that when he focuses the light through an Abbé condensor of N.A. 1·2 or 1·4 he is using the whole of the N.A. of his objective of N.A. 1·3. But it is well known that it has not yet been possible to construct a lens of high N.A. which will permit the use of an unbroken ("aplanatic") cone of light of much more than three-quarters its own N.A. An Abbé condensor can be used in focus with the iris fully open, because, while its total N.A. is very high, its aplanatic N.A. is relatively low. For the production of a "critical" image with an immersion lens, in the strict sense of the term, some form of aplanatised condensor is required.

In our opinion, if a paragraph were inserted explaining the distinction between total and aplanatic aperture and the use of corrected condensors generally, the value of this excellent part of the book would be much increased. Its appearance is of good omen for medical microscopy. We believe that there is much value in the suggestion the author makes that the student should practise the use of his instrument on such specimens as diatoms. There can be no doubt that in trying to resolve their finer markings he will be forced to the correct use of his instrument in a way he may easily escape from if his practice is confined to stained specimens.

There are comprehensive chapters on the examination of urine, stomach contents, faeces, parasites, etc. The unreliability of the hypobromite method for the estimation of urea is insisted on.

The chapter on blood examination is on the whole very well done. Reference might be made to Haldane's haemoglobinometer and to Pappenheim's beautiful combined methods of staining.

One cannot, on the whole, agree with the advice to differentiate megaloblasts from normoblasts by attending mainly to their size. As has been said, "the nucleus is the heraldic sign of the cell." In describing nucleated red cells, it would be well if reference were made to the tendency of their nuclear chromatin to radial arrangement. The lymphoidocyte is not described. One has often felt that a student's understanding of blood-cells would be simplified and his
interest quickened if the subject were treated more from the standpoint of development.

Dr. Todd concludes his manual with a chapter on sero-diagnostic methods. We would congratulate him on the production of a textbook which is very comprehensive and clearly written, and likely to prove of much use to students and practitioners. The author is careful not to claim exaggerated importance for any of the methods he describes. There is a good index.

Insanity in Everyday Practice. By E. G. Younger, M.D.(Brux.), M.R.C.P.(Lond.), etc. Third Edition. Pp. x. + 130. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1914. Price 3s. 6d. net.

There is no department of medical practice where more sudden and perplexing problems arise, or where more prestige is lost by the practitioner who fails to deal aright with them, than in that dealt with here. An “outline chart,” as the author terms it, will be welcome to many who have not time to master a larger work. The subject is treated in a thoroughly practical way; the hints given as to examination of a patient are sensible and well expressed; and the legal aspects of the subject are explained, including the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913. The various “types” and “special forms” of insanity are clearly though shortly described; and if the classification is not quite logical, it is supported by the authority of the familiar and official “Nomenclature of Disease.” Treatment is only dealt with so far as it is practicable for the general practitioner to carry it out.

We can recommend the volume to those who desire an introduction to the subject. It is interesting to learn that it has been translated into Chinese.

Treatise on Anatomy. By Sir Henry Morris. Fifth Edition, edited by C. M. Jackson, M.S., M.D. Pp. 1539. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1915. Price 30s. net.

The fifth edition of this book has undergone a considerable amount of re-writing and re-arranging, and the result is well up to the high standard set by previous editions. Owing to the retirement of Sir Henry Morris and Professor M’Murrich the work of editor has been undertaken by Professor C. M. Jackson of Minnesota. In the authors of the various sections a few changes are apparent in the present edition, the relative proportion of British and American writers, however, remaining much the same. The name of Professor David Waterston appears for the first time as the author of the section on Special Sense Organs.

The use of the B. N. A. terminology, more or less Anglicised, has been continued, and is undoubtedly proving a great boon on both sides of the Atlantic. This will be readily recognised when it is remembered
that some 30,000 anatomical terms have been reduced to 5000, not to mention the many other advantages of the system.

In this edition an attempt is made to assist the student commencing anatomy by indicating the fundamental facts in large type, while details which are unnecessary in the meantime are printed in smaller type. This method is very successful on the whole, but in the section on Morphogenesis it has been rather overdone, the "fundamental facts" here having been reduced to a minimum which cannot convey much intelligible information to the student. The whole of this section is somewhat sketchy and disconnected in character. The descriptions of the lymphatic and nervous systems by Eliot R. Clark of Johns Hopkins University, and Professor Irving Hardesty of Tulane University, respectively, are both exceedingly comprehensive and well written, and call for special praise.

The illustrations of this volume form the least satisfactory feature, and fall considerably below the high level which one expects in the modern text-book of anatomy. This is notably the case in the section on Articulations, but many of the other original figures are poor.

Text-Book of Public Health (late Husband's). By E. W. Hope, M.D., D.Sc. Eighth Edition. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1915. 5s. net.

One welcomes this volume, since it is an old friend in a comparatively new garb. Formerly the subject of forensic medicine was incorporated, but the expansion of public health as a study has compelled the separation of the two. Consequently the volume before us only deals with public health. The book is strong in parts, and weak in others, and, strange to say, the defects exist where Dr. Hope is known to be actually strongest. Under smallpox one looks in vain for the results of Dr. Hope's experience in aerial diffusion. The point is dismissed in a few words when in point of fact the student should be fully enlightened. Disinfection, too, is very lightly treated. Sanatoria require much more than 19 lines. Sanatoria are now clamant problems, more especially as regards cost of erection and administration. Under sanitary law one observes that the Scottish student has not been catered for at all. This rather interferes with the value of the book. Under the Factory and Workshop Act no mention is made of the provisions applied to laundries, which are important. The Public Health (Milk and Cream) Regulations have been modified, but the modifications are not mentioned. Taking into consideration the fact that new legislation for the milk traffic will come into operation in October, it is surprising that no mention has been made of the fact. Dr. Hope has scarcely given us a book sufficiently advanced for the present-day requirements of the candidate for a Public Health diploma.