BOOK REVIEWS.


This little book of 170 pages requires in this journal only mention of the topics discussed by it, as the article by Dr. Black published in number eleven of vol. iii, has already given the gist of the most original portion, and in regard to it the readers can judge for themselves.

The first half of the book gives a historical review of the germ theory of disease. It describes each important discovery and the methods of research adopted by each investigator. The last portion has been presented to our readers in abstract in the paper read by Dr. Black before the section on Practical Medicine and Materia Medica of the American Medical Association.

In the book before us four chapters or lectures are devoted to the consideration of the formation of poisons by micro-organisms. The first two treat of digestion and molecular changes incident to vitality; the third of the waste products thus developed and of their nature; the fourth of the poisonous nature of the waste products of bacterial growth. A short appendix is devoted to dental caries.


This report contains: Abstract of proceedings at the meetings during the year 1882; medical laws and institutions of the United States and Canada; small-pox epidemic, 1880-82; vaccination in Illinois; Proceedings of the Sanitary Council of the Mississippi Valley; mortality statistics, and many other matters collateral to these general topics.

Several minor points are worthy of note. In this report the value of the immigrant inspection service of the National Board of Health is clearly demonstrated. The questions used for the examination of candidates for licenses by the State Board, clearly show the impropriety of such examinations being conducted by other than practical teachers in medical science. In justification of this criticism we quote the following:

What chemical elements are contained in pure grape sugar not found in cane sugar? A catch question and not justifiable in an examination. Give the therapeutic uses and applications of aqua fluviatis or fontana? These terms are not in general medical use. We will suggest answers to the following questions: What is meant by "a qualified prognosis?" Ans. A confession of ignorance. How would you recognize the cancerous cachexia? Ans. By the diagnosis of cancer in an anemic patient. When are mammary abscesses salutary? Ans. Never. What are the chief causes of an excessive mortality and their remedies? Ans. War, pestilence and famine. The remedies are chiefly prophylactic—Statesmanship, properly enforced sanitary regulations, and good crops. What precautions—other than for the safety of the subject—would you observe in the exhibition of an anesthetic, and why? I should place my property in my wife's name to avoid the possibility of a suit for malpractice.

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE NEBRASKA STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY, held at Omaha, Nebraska, May 13 and 14, 1884. Cloth, 357 pages.

Judging from the official report of the proceedings this must have been a spirited and interesting meeting. It is to be regretted by the profession at large that Dr. James Carter's vigorous paper, the report of progress in practical medicine, pathology and special therapeutics, was cut by striking out his remarks on the ethics of the doctors of Omaha, for the free discussion of all questions of ethics is the best mode of maintaining the purity of the profession.

The numerous cases reported and the free expression of opinion on the part of practitioners gives the proceedings their chief value as medical literature.


Among the minutes we observe a resolution setting forth the benefits of a National Board of Health to the States in the valley of the Mississippi, and requesting the representatives in Congress from that State to secure the continuance of said Board.

The essays and discussions occupy over 200 pages of the volume. There are scattered through the whole many interesting papers and medical and surgical facts. We may be pardoned for calling special attention to the following: