ART. XXXII.—*Wöhler's Outlines of Organic Chemistry*. By RUDOLF FITTIG, Ph.D., Nat. Sc. D., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Tübingen. Translated from the eighth German edition, with additions, by IRA REMSEN, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Chemistry and Physics in Williams College, Massachusetts. 12mo. pp. xxxii., 530. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea, 1873.

PRECEDED, as this work is, by an introductory chapter upon the constitution of chemical compounds, which has been introduced by the translator to aid those who are not familiar with the recent changes in the theories of chemistry, it will be found most complete, and useful to all those who desire to study the subject, or are in want of a handbook for reference.

Organic chemistry has so important a bearing upon many of the branches of medicine, that a certain familiarity with it is, to say the least, convenient to those who wish to keep up with the advance in pathology and therapeutics, and to form an idea of the curious chemical relationship apparently existing between some of the more important remedies which are coming into general use. Hence, though this book is not especially intended for those interested in medicine, it contains much that may be of value to them; and, in addition to those subjects of more varied interest, a considerable space has been devoted to what are more generally considered the property of the profession—the ingredients of the blood, urine, bile, etc.

H. B. H.

ART. XXXIII.—*A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Obstetrics*. By WILLIAM H. BYFORD, A.M., M.D., Professor of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children in the Chicago Medical College, etc. Second Edition, thoroughly Revised. 8vo. pp. viii., 469. New York: Wm. Wood & Co., 1873.

CARELESSNESS in composition is the crying fault of medical authors—due, perhaps, to the wear and tear of a busy practice, to the hurry of the age, and to the lack of any literary training. Yet the language of an author, as much as his person, needs the toilet. So telling is the costume of a thought, that the tricks and tropes of oratory often pass for argument, the ornaments of rhetoric for truth. The cadenced twaddle of the Koran still imposes upon the understanding of the learned Moslem, its jingle still tickles the ear of the untutored nomad. On the other hand, originality and sterling merit can hardly atone for a dreary and obscure style. From a disregard of these maxims many an author has either failed altogether, or else has gained but a short-lived reputation. It was only for a few brief hours that the rabble of hucksters and fishermen tossed up their caps in honor of the unkempt Massaniello.

This growing evil induced us, some two years ago, to review the first edition of the work before us. Our criticism was, perhaps, too harsh; but if it has prompted the author "to thoroughly revise the whole, and rewrite a portion," we regret it no longer, for it has served our purpose. We now can as heartily congratulate him as we then could not. Errors of grammar and infelicities of expression are still too conspicuous, but they are a tithe of what they were; and really the book is in every respect so vastly improved that we have not the heart to give them.

With some of his views we differ; his teachings are not always above criticism; but, being those of a thoroughly earnest and practical man, they cannot lead the student far astray. In comparison with the first edition, this one contains much to praise and little to blame. To apply a famous môt of Nesselrode's, Prof. Byford "has not been pouting, he has been reflecting." W. G.