

ART. XVIII. *System der Physiologie umfassend das allgemeine der Physiologie, die Physiologische Geschichte der Menschheit, die des Menschen und die der einzelnen organischen systeme im menschen, für naturforscher und aerzte bearbeitet.* Von Dr. CARL GUSTAV CARUS, &c., 2 vols. 8vo, pp. 372—460. Dresden, 1838, and 1839.

A System of Physiology, embracing General Physiology, the Physiological History of Man, and of his individual organs, for the use of Naturalists and Physicians. By Dr. C. G. CARUS.

IT would be impossible to give to our readers a correct idea of the physiological doctrines advanced in the two volumes before us, without presenting a critical analysis of the greater portion of their contents. Such an analysis would, however, occupy more space than we can well appropriate to a work so essentially theoretical in its character. Dr. Carus has attempted to construct from the comparatively scanty materials at his disposal, a complete system of Biology as the foundation of general as well as special physiology. To the theories advanced by the author we are willing to concede the praise of ingenuity, and, so far as relates to the general facts and observations upon which these theories are based, he has certainly exhibited commendable industry in their collection and sufficient accuracy in their detail. On most of the points connected with the general doctrines of physiology, his observations, it is true, are particularly interesting, while many of his views, if they cannot be received as fully established, are at least deserving of attention in consequence of their very great plausibility. Dr. Carus has, nevertheless, so intimately blended, in relation to almost every subject of which he treats, fact and hypothesis, established truths and bold assumptions, as to vitiate, in a great measure, all his leading deductions. His entire system of Physiology can, in fact, be viewed in no other light than as a splendid hypothesis, highly plausible, we confess, in many of its parts, but in others wanting even this recommendation.

The time has not yet arrived when any attempt at the formation of a complete "System of Physiology" can be expected to be successful. On many important points connected with the functions of the living organism, our knowledge is at best imperfect, while in relation to many others we must confess our entire ignorance; it is even probable that many of what are now considered fully established physiological facts, will be shown by future observations and discoveries to be errors, or, at least, to be so essentially modified as to render inaccurate whatever system may be attempted to be based upon them. It is only by the accumulation of facts, and the further verification of those we already possess by judiciously conducted observations and experiments, that the promotion of physiology to the rank of an exact science can be effected.

While the scientific reader may derive from the work of Dr. Carus many useful hints, we cannot recommend it to the student of physiology, convinced that it would be rather calculated to mislead him than to convey to him any positive instruction.

D. F. C.

ART. XIX. *Wenken en Meeningen omtrent Geneeskundige Staatsregeling en Algemeene Geneeskunde, onder medewerking van eenige Vaderlandische verzameld en Uitgevevendoor J. P. HEIJE, Practiserend Geneesheer te Amsterdam.*

*Jahrbuch der Gesammten Staatsarzneikunde. Herausgegeben von Dr. C. F. L. WILDBERG, Grossherzoglich, Mecklenburg-Strel Ober-Medicinalrath.*

BOTH these Journals are devoted, the first chiefly and the second exclusively, to Medical Jurisprudence and Public Hygiene.

That edited by Dr. Heije, which, besides the several subjects connected with legal medicine, embraces in its plan the ordinary topics of a Medical Journal, is published at Amsterdam, and was commenced in March, 1838; only the first four numbers have been received by us.

Of the Annals of Legal Medicine by Dr. Wildberg, published at Leipzig, five volumes have already appeared.

Both works exhibit a very considerable amount of talent on the part of their respective editors and contributors, and, by the dissemination of facts connected with the important subjects to which they are devoted, they cannot fail to do much good in directing the attention of the profession to the study and improvement of every branch of legal medicine.

The leading articles of both journals are replete with interest, without, however, presenting much novelty either in reference to their subjects or the manner in which they are treated—many of them are of a strictly local character.

Among the more important contents of the four numbers of Dr. Heije's Journal may be enumerated:—

On the Influence of Schools on the Health of Children; by the Editor; a very sensible paper, comprising many excellent hints for the improvement of the physical discipline of schools and the arrangement of the periods of study.

On the Legal Provisions in relation to Diseases of the Mind; by the Editor. After pointing out the regulations in relation to the Insane of the French Government, and commenting upon their policy and beneficial tendency, Dr. H. computes that eight hospitals, each adapted for the reception of three hundred insane patients, will be required in Holland. In Friesland there is, according to the editor, one insane to every 2739 of its inhabitants, and in Overysseel one to every 899.

On the Examination of Persons adapted to serve as Recruits and Substitutes in the National Militia, by the Editor; containing some useful hints on simulated diseases.

On the Plague and Quarantines, by Dr. Bussemaker.

Two Medico Legal Investigations in Cases of Accusation for Infanticide.

A Review of Schröder v. d. Kolk's Report on the neglect of the proper means for the Alleviation of the Condition and for the Cure of the Insane in Holland; an interesting paper, though the remarks it embraces are of an almost exclusively local character.

There were treated in the Insane Hospital at Utrecht, between the years 1832 and 1837, 317 patients, of whom 88 were cured.

On Premature Interments and houses for the reception of the dead previous to interment; a paper containing many important suggestions.

On Vaccination, Varioloid, &c., by Dr. Arntzenius. The writer is a strong advocate for vaccination. He believes it to be in all cases when fully performed an effectual preventive against small pox. When it fails to protect the system from an attack of the latter, he believes this to arise either occasionally from some peculiarity of constitution in the patient, or more generally from the neglect of the physician, in consequence of which the system has not been placed fully under the influence of the vaccine virus, and from vaccination being frequently performed by individuals wholly ignorant of the distinctive characters of the genuine affection. Dr. A. considers it probable that when, after vaccination, an herpetic eruption or scrofulous symptoms occur, the predisposition to an attack of small pox may not be fully extinguished. He urges revaccination after ten or fifteen years in all cases in which there is any doubt as to the full protection of the system by the previous vaccination.

A Review of Dr. Bosch's Treatise on Indian aphthæ, (*aphthæ orientales*.) The author denominates the disease a phlegmasia of the mucous membrane of the stomach and lungs. The common aphthæ he considers to be a strictly exanthematous disease. He proposes for the cure of the Indian aphthæ, gentle laxatives with frictions of mercurial ointment over the epigastrium in the commencement, and, at a later period, small doses of sulphuric acid and tonics, particularly the lichen Islandicus, and externally leeches and frictions with a solution of tartar emetic.

In the Annals of Dr. Wildberg, the papers deserving of particular notice are the following:—

On the necessity of an assiduous attention on the part of the state to the

suppression of prostitution and unchastity and the means adapted to that end; by the Editor.

Dr. W., after noticing the increase of prostitution and unchastity which has taken place of late years, and the baneful influence which these vices exert not only on the individuals addicted to them, but upon society at large, proceeds to consider the causes to which their increase is to be attributed, under the following heads:—

1. The entire ignorance in which the youth of all classes of society are left, in relation to the structure and functions of the human body, and, consequently, of what is necessary for its health and well being.

2. The defective education of children, both moral and physical.

3. The neglect of children, on the part of their parents and instructors, during their hours of relaxation and school holidays.

4. The intimate intercourse of children of different classes of society.

5, 6. The excessive luxury of the present day, and the prevailing taste for pleasure and dissipation.

7. The great extent to which the perusal of love tales and other improper works is promoted by the numerous circulating libraries and reading rooms, and, in consequence, the powerful excitement afforded to the imagination and sensual appetites in early life.

8. The disregard in which marriage is held, and the obstacles thrown in the way of its early contraction.

9. The want of respect for the moral character of men, and the tolerating, excusing and holding in equal estimation those of dissolute lives and characters.

10. The neglect of clergymen in not enforcing the moral obligations opposed to prostitution and unchastity.

11. The neglect on the part of the public authorities of those measures which are calculated to prevent and suppress these vices.

The means proposed by the writer for the diminution and extinction of prostitution and unchastity may be inferred from the above enumeration of the causes to which he refers its promotion and increase.

Two excellent papers occur in the third Number from the pen of the Editor; the first, on the causes which induce so many mothers to give up the suckling of their infants, and the injury which these incur from hired nurses; and the second, on self-destruction from intemperance in the use of ardent spirits.

Advocate Bopp, of Darmstadt, presents a very interesting contribution towards the history of legal medicine.

The various details presented in the communications respecting the legal regulations of the Grand-Duchy of Hessa to prevent the too early interment of the dead; the provisions of the Duchy of Nassau and of the Arch-Duchy of Hessa in relation to legal medicine; and the legal provisions of the latter Duchy in regard to the medical attendance of the poor; will be read with great profit and pleasure by all who are interested in the subject of public hygiene and medical jurisprudence.

From the general summary of intelligence appended to each Number of the *Annals*, we select the following statistics:—

In St. Petersburg, there were born in the year 1838, 11,120 children; the deaths the same year amounted to 11,711—giving an excess of deaths of 591.

In Moscow, there were born in the year 1838, 9152 children, and there died 7967 persons—giving an excess of births of 1185.

In the city of Posen, with a population of 36,468, there were born in the year 1838, 1388 children, and there died 960 individuals—giving an excess of births of 428.

In the City and Parish of Elberfeld, with a population of 35,411, there were born in 1838, 1726 children, viz: 865 boys, 861 girls—68 of which were illegitimate. Twins occurred 14 times, and 97 children were dead born. There died the same year 1192, viz: 639 men and 553 women—the oldest of whom was 99 years, 3 months—excess of births this year 535.

In the City and Suburbs of Rostock, there were born in 1838, 567, viz: 273

boys and 294 girls—72 of whom were illegitimate. There died 463—243 males 220 females—excess of births 104. Married this year 137 couple.

In the City and Suburbs of Vienna, there were born in 1838, 16,296 children, and there died 14,393 individuals—excess of births 1903; 3087 of the deaths were from diseases of the lungs, 1972 from consumption, and 100 from small pox.

In Berlin, with a population of 280,000, there were born in 1838, 9429, viz: 4925 boys and 4504 girls; of whom 1296, viz: 676 boys and 620 girls were illegitimate. There were 107 cases of twins and 1 of triplets. The deaths this year amounted to 8649—excess of births 780. Of the illegitimate children 789 died. The suicides amounted to 78—2753 couple were married.

In the Grand-Duchy of Mecklenberg-Schwerin, with a population of 482,692, there were born in 1838, 18,125 children, of whom 944 were either dead born or died previous to baptism, and 2400 were illegitimate. There died this year 9819—excess of births 8306. The suicides amounted to 54; 3690 couple were married. Of the deaths, there were 1209 of persons over 70—423 of persons over 80—60 of persons over 90, and 3 of persons over 100.

In the Grand-Duchy of Mecklenberg-Strelitz, in the year 1838—in the Duchy of Strelitz, there were born 2403, namely, 1258 boys and 1155 girls—273 of whom were illegitimate; 24 cases were twins. There died 1630, namely, 863 men and 767 women—between 80 and 90, 65—between 90 and 100, 8; suicides 11; married 584 couple. In the Principality of Ratzeburg, there were born 539 children, of whom 55 were illegitimate—10 cases were twins; there died 323; married 145 couple. In the whole of the Grand-Duchy, the births exceeded the deaths by 989.

In Frankfort on the Maine, there were born in 1838, 1176 children, including 56 dead born—there died 1178—giving an excess of deaths of 2; 311 couple were married.  
D. F. C.

**ART. XX.** *Annual Report of the Interments in the City and County of New York for the year 1839, with Accompanying Remarks.* By WILLIAM A. WALTERS, City Inspector. New York.

THIS is an interesting statistical document. In the construction of the tables, the author has followed with some slight alteration the excellent plan introduced by his predecessor, Dr. Dannel, noticed on a former occasion, (No. for August, 1839, p. 429.) These tables, Dr. Walters states, are as accurate as possible, consistent with the requirements of existing statistics; but that to furnish exact returns, the bills of mortality should be drawn, not from the number of interments, but rather from the actual number of deaths occurring in the city. No proper estimate of deaths in proportion to the population, he adds, can be given, until we are furnished, first, with a register of births; and, secondly, with the new census of the city and county, now in course of preparation.

The following remarks of Dr. Walters furnish a synopsis of the principal points of interest.

“The whole number of interments within the city during the year ending December 31st, 1839, were 7953; being 100 less than for the year preceding.

“Of these, 7491 were from among our white population, and 462 were coloured persons.

“Of the whole number, 4389 were males and 3564 females. This excess of mortality among the male population, as already stated in the reports of interments for previous years, is not easily explained, and is probably much greater than the proportion of male over female residents.

“The disparity commences during foetal existence, as is shown in the table of still-born infants, and continues almost through every period of life.

“The average mortality among our foreign population appears to be much