

A TREATISE ON NERVOUS AND MENTAL DISEASES, FOR STUDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS IN MEDICINE. By Landon Carter Gray, M.D. Pp. 687; including a glossary and index and 168 illustrations. Lea Brothers & Co. Philadelphia, 1893.

The work under consideration is by no means a hasty compilation of facts and theories, but is the practical result of seven years' careful labor by an author who is particularly fitted by experience and capability for the successful accomplishment of his task. It is a difficult matter to embrace in one volume, without making it too cumbersome, a treatise on insanity, together with a treatise on nervous diseases, without one or both of the subjects suffering from a deficiency of elaboration and lack of finish. It is a unique experiment, and one which has not been previously attempted and can only be accomplished by the omission of all matter which is not absolutely essential. In this instance the attempt to avoid all superfluousness of language is apparent, but not unpleasantly so. The various subjects are shorn, perhaps too closely, of rhetorical ornamentation to be entertaining, but this, of course, does not in the least detract from the scientific value of the work.

The opening chapter on the anatomy of the brain and the localization of the various cortical centres and the anatomy of the cord are carefully written and scientifically accurate. The minute anatomy, especially that relating to the nuclei of the cranial nerves and their fibre and the fibre systems of the cord, is not elucidated sufficiently to satisfy the minds of most readers. Illustrations accompanying the text on these subjects are of paramount importance, as they furnish the best means of impressing on the mind the topographical relations of the various cell and fibre systems. The illustrations of the pons and medulla, from an artistic standpoint, are eminently satisfactory, but from an educational point of view they are somewhat disappointing. The nuclei and fibres of the last six of the cranial nerves are not depicted at all in transverse section, and the text gives decidedly meager and insufficient information about them. The gross anatomy and topography of the brain and cerebellum and the cortical localization of special centres are very satisfactory. Excellent illustrations elucidate the important features of these subjects, and the descriptive text is concise, accurate, and sufficiently exhaustive.

The same criticism which has just been applied to the medulla can be applied equally well to the spinal cord. The anatomy of the cord is well set forth as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The ascending and descending nerve tracts in the white matter are aptly described and their topography clearly indicated in the accompanying illustrations. The change in the contour of the gray matter at different levels and the arrangement of the groups of cells in the anterior horns are satisfactorily shown. Clark's columns are, however, only referred

to as being the recipients of a set of fibres entering the posterior horns. No information is advanced concerning the situation of the cells, or of the points of origin and termination of the column, and the probable function of the cells is not referred to. The nerve fibres entering and leaving the cord are all described in the text except those concerned in the transmission of the reflexes, but none of them are shown in illustration.

The chapter on electricity is certainly very complete. The different forms of batteries which can be used for medical purposes; the various instruments which are essential in electro-diagnosis and electro-therapeutics; the method of applying the currents, and the diagnostic uses of the currents, are explained thoroughly, and will be found profitable reading for the student and practitioner.

The chapter on tests of motor and sensory symptoms is especially to be recommended. In it the reader is instructed in the various methods of examining for abnormalities of the special senses, the reflexes and the muscular system, points which are usually essential in diagnosis and which are not often thoroughly understood. The rest of the treatise on nervous diseases includes diseases of the peripheral nerves, of the spinal cord and of the brain; cerebro-spinal diseases; neuroses, under which heading are included such affections as epilepsy, neurasthenia, hysteria, hypochondria and migraine; diseases of microbic origin, such as tetanus and hydrophobia; and the various other affections without which a treatise of nervous diseases would be incomplete.

The subjects are well arranged. The symptomatology and etiology are very thorough and complete without being in the least verbose. The pathology is, in the main, precise and correct. In a very few instances, however, the advances of the past year or two have been overlooked. This slight defect is more than counterbalanced by the attention which the author gives to therapeutics, a subject which is generally more or less neglected by modern writers. The treatment of each disease is considered in all its details, and the usefulness of the most recent remedies demonstrated.

The treatise on Mental Diseases is by no means the least important feature of the work. Dr. Gray is well qualified by years of personal experience to write comprehensively on this subject. The student is not confused by a bewildering and interminable classification; on the contrary, Dr. Gray has attempted to simplify this subject, with a success which, it is hoped, other authors will not be slow to recognize and imitate. This is especially evident in the chapter on Paranoia, under which heading the author, whether properly so or not, includes several forms of insanity, such as the puerperal condition, insanity from certain febrile diseases, epilepsy and toxæmia from alcohol, morphia and cocaine, varieties which, by other authors, are usually considered under very different headings.

The perusal of this part of the work is calculated to give the reader an excellent insight into the nature of and difference between the various forms of mental disease. If it is less complete and less scientific than

some other works on insanity it is at the same time less complicated and more comprehensible. It was not written for alienists who may regard it purely from the standpoint of the alienist, but by other medical readers it will be highly appreciated and often consulted where an ultra-scientific treatise would be rejected.

The glossary at the end of the volume will materially assist those who are not conversant with neurological terms to a thorough comprehension of the text.

The index is not by any means complete. It is an important feature in a work of this kind and greatly enhances its usefulness. Many references are entirely omitted.

Dr. Gray is to be congratulated on his choice of a publisher. The book is well printed on excellent paper, and the illustrations, taking them all together, are far superior to those contained in other works upon the same subject.

G. M. H.

INTERNATIONAL CLINICS. A quarterly of Clinical Lectures on Medicine, Surgery, Gynæcology, Pediatrics, Neurology, Dermatology, Laryngology, Ophthalmology and Otology, by professors and lecturers in the leading medical colleges of the United States, Great Britain and Canada. Edited by John M. Keating, M.D.; J. P. Crozu Griffith, M.D.; J. Mitchel Bruce, M.D., F.R.C.P.; David W. Finlay, M.D., F.R.C.P., April, 1891. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, publishers.

This first volume of these quarterlies is undoubtedly of value to all who desire to inform themselves through modern thought on the topics of which it treats. It is evidently the desire of the publishers to give the general practitioner a sort of post-graduate instruction at home. The effort, as far as one can judge from this first volume, is all that its publishers could do in this direction, and they evidently have not spared money or zeal in the task. The work is well put together—paper, typography, and illustrations—all of the best.

The following are some of the subjects treated of in the field of neurology and medicine:

Acromegaly, by James Ross. Different Types of Paralysis in Young Children, by Landon Carter Gray. Chorea, by Sir Dyce Duckworth. The Remote Effects of Traumatism as Seen by the Neurologist, by H. C. Wood. Functional Nervous Troubles, Neurasthenia, Its Occurrence in Young and Old; Symptomatology and Treatment, by B. Sachs. Myotonia and Athetoid Spasm, by Chas. K. Mills. Alcoholic Paralysis, by David Ferrier. Treatment of Obstinate Sciatic Pain by Splint Rest and Cold, by S. Weir Mitchell. Etc., etc. In all thirty-seven subjects are treated of in the various departments of the medical art.