

through the whole body; and the influence which a residence in dry or in moist air, at great elevations, or at the level of the sea, may exert on the health, in so far as the evaporation may be thus accelerated or retarded, requires no special explanation; while, on the other hand, the suppression of the cutaneous transpiration must be followed by a disturbance of this motion, in consequence of which the normal process is changed where this occurs. The pressure which, in consequence of the evaporation, urges the fluids within the body to move towards the skin, is, as may be readily understood, equal to the difference of pressure acting on the surface of the skin."

The author points to the fact that the experiments described in the work before us, in so far as they permit us to draw conclusions as to the cause of the motion of the juices of the animal body, agree in all respects with the observations made on plants by Stephen Hales, more than 120 years since.

The experiments and deductions of Hales are next examined. In the course of these Dr. L. refers to the *potato rot*, which he refers to the same cause as the blight in hops—a stagnation of the juices of the plant in consequence of suppressed transpiration; this latter being the result of a combination of certain conditions accidentally coincident. The cause being the same that in spring and autumn excites influenza, that is, the disease is the effect of the temperature and hygrometric state of the atmosphere, by which, in consequence of the disturbance of the normal transpiration, a check is suddenly, or for a considerable time, given to the motion of the fluids, which is one chief condition of life, and which thus becomes insufficient for the purposes of health, or even hurtful to the individual.

In our notice of the work of Dr. Liebig we have attempted nothing further than a mere outline of the general conclusions deduced by the author from the experiments detailed. To understand fully these views the experiments must be carefully examined and compared with the comments by which they are accompanied. Upon the accuracy of the views of Dr. L., as to the causes of the motion and due distribution of the juices of the animal body, we offer no opinion. To a certain extent they have, no doubt, some foundation in truth. We fear, however, that the zeal of a certain class of modern physiologists to explain the functions of the different parts of the animal organism by the physical and chemical properties of the tissues and fluids which enter into their composition, has led them to forget, that the property of vitality is a very important element in carrying on or controlling most of the organic actions of the living body.

We append the remarks of Dr. Gregory, contained in the preface to the English edition; which it is important to keep constantly in memory, in our investigation of the important subjects embraced in the investigation of Dr. Liebig.

"While it is proved, that the mechanical causes of pressure and evaporation, and the chemical composition of its fluids and membranes, have a more direct, constant, and essential influence on the motion of the animal fluids, and consequently on the state of the health, than has been usually supposed, it is evident that very much remains to be done in tracing that influence under the ever-varying circumstances of the animal body, and in applying the knowledge thus acquired to the purposes of hygiene and therapeutics. But it is equally obvious, that the above-mentioned mechanical and chemical causes are not alone sufficient to explain the phenomena of animal life, since they are present equally in a dead and in a living body, so that, while every advance in physiology enables us to explain more facts on chemical and mechanical principles, something always remains, which, for the present, is beyond our reach, and which may forever remain so."

D. F. C.

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ART. XXIII.—*The Nature and Treatment of Deafness and Diseases of the Ear; and the Treatment of the Deaf and Dumb.* By WILLIAM DUFTON, M. R. C. S. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1848: 12mo. pp. 120. With a Plate.

THIS little volume commends itself to the profession by the modesty and good sense which characterize it. The author does not profess to have made any brilliant discoveries in the treatment of aural diseases, nor has he endeavoured to

make a huge volume by minutely detailing the structure of all the parts which compose the ear, with a description of their functions; but leaving these to be learned from the various works on anatomy and physiology, and contenting himself with the more practical part of the subject, he has given a short account of the pathology and treatment of the principal diseases of the organ.

The work is divided into three chapters. In the first the author treats of inflammation of the ear generally, both chronic and acute and its consequences. In the second of inflammation, chronic and acute, of particular parts, as well as of the growth of tumours, and the introduction of foreign bodies into the ear. The third chapter is devoted to the consideration of those diseases of the ear which, not being inflammatory, are referred to a particular state of the nerves of the part.

If the knowledge of the nature and treatment of diseases of the ear has not kept pace with the progress of other departments of our science, the fault is to be ascribed as much to the neglect of medical men to devote themselves to the investigation of these affections, as to the inherent difficulties of the subject. The student and country practitioner, who has not the time or opportunity to study the more elaborate works on the subject, will find, in this unpretending volume, much useful information respecting the character and treatment of the principal diseases of the ear.

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ART. XXIV.—*Clinical Midwifery; comprising the Histories of five hundred and forty-five cases of difficult, pretermatural and complicated Labour. With Commentaries.* By ROBERT LEE, M. D., F. R. S., Physician to the British Lying-in Hospital and St. Marylebone Infirmary, Lecturer on Midwifery at St. George's Hospital. First American from the second London Edition. Philadelphia, Lea & Blanchard, 1849: pp. 235, 12mo.

THIS volume consists of a series of eight Reports, comprising, as the author states, the most important practical details of all the cases of difficult parturition which have come under his observation during the last fifteen years, and of which he has preserved histories. They have been collected and arranged for publication, in the hope that they may be found to illustrate, confirm, or correct the rules laid down by systematic operators for the treatment of difficult labours, and supply that course of clinical instruction in midwifery, the want of which has been so often experienced by practitioners at the commencement of their career.

A volume containing the practical experience of so competent an observer as Dr. Lee could not be otherwise than valuable, and we commend this one to the profession as being a storehouse of valuable facts and precedents, to which they may refer to with confidence in cases of difficulty.

The first Report contains observations on the present state of operative midwifery; and a succinct account of all the cases (eighty) of difficult parturition, which have fallen under the author's observation, in which the midwifery forceps was employed, or it had been proposed to have recourse to it, with a view of illustrating the various circumstances which render it necessary to employ this instrument, of determining the positive good we derive from it, and the injurious consequences which result when it is rashly and injudiciously applied.

The second Report is devoted to an account of difficult labours from distortion of the pelvis, swelling of the soft parts, convulsions, hydrocephalus in the fœtus, and other causes, in which delivery was effected by the operation of craniotomy.

The third Report treats of the induction of premature labour in cases of distortion of the pelvis; cancer of the gravid uterus; uterine and ovarian cysts and tumours; organic and nervous diseases of the heart; dropsy of the amnion; obstinate vomiting; hemorrhage from the bowels; chorea and insanity during pregnancy.

The fourth report contains the histories of one hundred and one cases of pretermatural labour.

The fifth report comprises the histories of sixty two cases of placental presentation.