

Recent Literature.

Practical Midwifery: A Handbook of Treatment.

By EDWARD REYNOLDS, M.D., Physician to Out-Patients of the Boston Lying-in Hospital, Assistant in Obstetrics in Harvard University, Fellow of the American Gynecological Society, etc. 12mo, cloth, pages 421, with 121 illustrations. New York: Wm. Wood & Co. 1892.

In view of the well-known fact that the systematic treatises on obstetrics, which must necessarily treat fully the science as well as the art of midwifery, and include in their contents chapters on pelvic anatomy and embryology, are unable to devote much space to the many technical details of obstetric practice, the author of this handbook set himself the task of preparing a volume which should "furnish to students and inexperienced practitioners a full description of those practical details of conduct which are necessary to the management of every case of gestation, labor, or the convalescence therefrom." In following this plan, the author has consumed no space by extended discussions of theories, or of the relative advantages and disadvantages of various methods: he has sought rather to give a clear description of at least one method of dealing with emergencies, and of one justifiable plan of treating the varying conditions of obstetric practice. In short, he has endeavored not to supplant, but to supplement, the systematic treatises commonly used in medical schools, and to impart to the student much that is usually learned, if at all, only from lectures and individual teaching.

The work is divided into six parts, treating respectively pregnancy, labor, obstetric surgery, abnormal labor, the pathology of labor, and the puerperium. Part I is in our judgment the least valuable, owing to the fact that the personal experience of no one man is so extensive in the complications of pregnancy as in the management of labor and the puerperium. To speak authoritatively on the manifold complications and intercurrent affections of pregnancy one must have had a profound and extensive experience. The subject is very well treated, however, by the author, and there is not much that calls for adverse criticism. The author places the date of quickening at about the end of twenty-two weeks: this date is commonly placed at the eighteenth week, and in our experience it falls below the eighteenth week oftener than it goes beyond the twentieth. Salivation is said to occur "rather less constantly" than nausea and vomiting: we had supposed this to be a very rare affection, having observed it but twice in fifteen years. In speaking of hydatidiform mole, the author says that "instances have been reported, in which, in twin pregnancy, one amniotic sac was completely filled with the mole." As the so-called hydatidiform mole is a cystic degeneration of the chorion, we fail to see how the amnion can be filled with the degenerated mass. In the treatment of hydramnion, the author lends the weight of his authority to aspiration of the uterus through the abdominal wall: we question the wisdom of this procedure.

The author's treatment of Part II is admirable and will prove of the utmost value to the student. The obstetric nomenclature is that adopted by the Washington International Medical Congress. Abdominal inspection, palpation, and auscultation as measures of diagnosis are worthily treated, and the aseptic manage-

ment of labor receives the attention it deserves. The chapters on normal labor and delayed labor are strongly written; but we do not agree with the author that the membranes should be ruptured in the interval between pains, nor do we see why milk should be prohibited the patient during the labor in view of the possible necessity for etherization.

The part on obstetric surgery is perhaps the strongest section of the book: it is written *con amore*. The preparations for operation are clearly and fully described to the utmost detail. We have never seen the subject better treated outside the lecture-room. The chapters on forceps and version are admirable in the thoroughness and soundness of all their teachings. The chapter on the destructive operations is also excellent; but we do not agree that after craniotomy the external blade of the cranioclast should be placed over the face. In most cases application over the occiput results in a successful extraction, and the features of the child are not disfigured,—a matter of some importance, as many parents wish to see the face of their child, even though still-born.

The section on abnormal labor begins with a chapter on labor in posterior positions of the occiput. We confess to a certain disappointment in the treatment of this subject: while much is commendable, especially the operative treatment, the author's meaning is not always clear. The treatment of brow and face presentations is good, and the teaching of the management of breech cases, including the manual extraction, is beyond criticism.

In the section on the pathology of labor, the chapter on contracted pelves, while not equal to Schoeder's classical treatment of the subject, is clearly written, and adequate to the general scope of the book: pelvimetry receives careful attention. The chapters on eclampsia, placenta previa, concealed accidental hemorrhage, and post-partum hemorrhage are extremely well done; and the treatment of these serious complications, an ill their phases, is clearly presented with marked attention to details. The operative treatment of the varying degrees of perineal lacerations is excellent, although we do not agree that "in all primary operations . . . an extreme amount of swelling is certain to appear within the first forty-eight hours." We think the author is in error in his statement, in the chapter on multiple pregnancies, that in twins from a double-yolked ovum the two children are contained within a single amniotic sac: the weight of authority shows that while the placenta and chorion are single, each child has its separate amnion, although the septum between the two sacs sometimes partially atrophies. The author has treated the subject of asphyxia neonatorum with commendable care, and it may be said that throughout the book great stress is laid on the value of fetal life.

Part VI opens with an excellent chapter on normal convalescence. The care of the new-born child and of premature infants receives careful and comprehensive treatment. The chapter on pelvic complications and intercurrent diseases of the convalescence is well done; but we do not agree with the author as to the wisdom of using pessaries as early as the end of the second week for the relief of uterine malpositions. It seems to us preferable to await the natural recovery which is generally observed to ensue as the patient gains strength and the uterine ligaments recover their tone, and to reserve active interference with pessaries for the comparatively few cases in which spontaneous reposition

of a displaced uterus does not occur. At the end of two months it would seem sufficiently early to correct any existing malposition. The diseases of the breasts and nipples are very fully and successfully dealt with. The chapter on septicæmia is clearly and forcibly written, and its teachings are in accord with the most approved modern practice. We cannot agree that phlegmasia alba dolens, due to extension of a thrombus from the pelvic veins into the thigh, is *always* the result of sepsis, while admitting that such is generally the case. We are persuaded that cases of phlegmasia do occur by extension of thrombi in pelvic veins, which thrombi are the result of pressure and bruising in difficult instrumental labors; and that such thrombosis and extension are especially likely to occur in anæmic and debilitated women, and when not initiated by septic absorption. The book closes with a satisfactory index prepared by Dr. F. H. Brown.

Of the book as a whole we can speak in terms of high commendation. The general plan and arrangement are excellent, and we are confident that it will prove to be what its author intended, a book for students *par excellence*. The numerous illustrations, while not invariably artistic, are such as clearly to express the meaning of the text. The book reads well, the style is almost always clear, and the English is faultless. We congratulate the author on his work, which reflects great credit on himself, on his hospital, and on his school.

C. M. G.

A Handbook of the Diseases of the Eye, and their Treatment. By HENRY B. SWANZY, A.M., M.B., F.R.C.S.I., Surgeon to the National Eye and Ear Infirmary, Dublin, etc. Fourth edition, with illustrations; 12mo, 518 pp. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son & Co.

This book, although intended mainly for students, is an excellent work for the busy practitioner. Its descriptions are clear and full, yet not too voluminous to make it a satisfactory handbook for ready reference. The chapter upon granular lids and their treatment is fully up to the times. Expression of the contents of the follicles early in the disease is recommended; and the advantages and limitations in the use of jequirity at a later stage of the disease are clearly put, and its use judiciously advocated. Indeed, the treatment is especially good in all the conjunctival diseases.

It seems rather strange to us in America to see the statement that errors in refraction do not produce blepharitis; nevertheless, our author holds that opinion in common with other English ophthalmologists.

Considerable space is given to a well-considered *résumé* of the present knowledge of the pupil — conditions in health and disease. Two good colored figures are given which illustrate very well the several theories of the supply of the macula region as distinguished from the rest of the field of vision, showing the effect of a lesion in the cortical centre, the optic tract, the chiasma or the fasciculus lateralis in each eye. Dr. Swanzy has not brought himself to the advocacy of the simple extraction without iridectomy, and regards the danger of prolapse of the iris as a fatal objection to that operation.

Altogether it expresses the conclusions of a man who, while quite up to the times, is, nevertheless, not an enthusiast in regard to any method of treatment simply because it is new. The book justifies its fourth edition.

THE BOSTON Medical and Surgical Journal.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1893.

A Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Allied Sciences, published at Boston, weekly, by the undersigned.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS: \$5.00 per year, in advance, postage paid, for the United States, Canada and Mexico; \$6.56 per year for all foreign countries belonging to the Postal Union.

All communications for the Editor, and all books for review, should be addressed to the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, 283 Washington Street, Boston.

All letters containing business communications, or referring to the publication, subscription, or advertising department of this Journal, should be addressed to the undersigned.

Remittances should be made by money-order, draft or registered letter, payable to

DANRELL & UPHAM,
283 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

THE SELF-PURIFICATION OF RIVERS.

Vigorous discussion has been going on for the past two or three years in Europe as to the so-called self-purification of streams, the principal rivers under observation being the Isar at Munich, the Elbe at Dresden, the Spree and the Oder.

At the meeting of the German Public Health Society at Leipsic in September, 1891,¹ the subject of a thorough investigation of the rivers of Germany, on the part of the State authorities, was discussed, with a view to fix definite standards for the degree of pollution which might be permitted in each.

Professor Frankland, at the Congress of Hygiene in London in August, had maintained that the disappearance of microbes in running water was due to deposition only, while Professor Pettenkofer had stated that he believed that the self-purification of rivers was, for the most part, due to the vegetable life in the water, just as the surface of a manured field was purified by vegetation. Professor Pettenkofer remarked that Prausnitz had examined the subject from a bacteriological point of view, and, while he found that immediately below the exit of the principal sewer of Munich, the number of bacteria in the water was considerably increased, before the river had reached Freising the germs present were reduced by eighty per cent. It might be said that notwithstanding the great diminution in the ordinary species of water bacteria, it was possible that pathogenic germs might pass into the river, and cause mischief to inhabitants lower down the stream. Dr. Niedner showed that, in the case of Dresden, after a flow of only one mile below the town, the germs in the Elbe were decreased by one-half.

Professor Buchner claims, in a lecture before the Munich Medical Union, in 1892,² that typhoid and cholera bacilli, freely distributed in water, were destroyed by direct sunlight in from one to two hours; and by diffused daylight, in from four to five hours. The disinfecting activity of light was so powerful, that,

¹ Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für öff. Gesundheitspflege, 1892, p. 108.

² Centralblatt für Bakteriologie.