

The sixth Report embraces the histories of forty-four cases of uterine hemorrhage in the latter months of pregnancy, during labour and after parturition.

In the seventh Report are given the histories of thirty-five cases of retention of the placenta.

The eighth and last Report comprises the histories of forty-eight cases of puerperal convulsions.

From the above *catalogue raisonnée* of the contents of this volume it will be perceived that it embraces most of the cases of difficulty which present themselves to the obstetrical practitioner; and coming as it does with the high authority of Dr. Lee's name, it is unnecessary for us to say anything further in its commendation.

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ART. XXV.—*The Principles and Practice of Medicine, in a Series of Essays.* By JOHN W. HOOD, M. D. "By the union of study and practice, we attain a knowledge of the profession." 8vo. pp. 263: Philadelphia, Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co., 1848.

ONE original medical work, remarks a late writer, even though replete with faults, is of more value than all the well executed compilations which the press pours forth annually. Admitting the truth of this dictum, there will be little difficulty in arriving at a correct appreciation of the value of the *Principles and Practice of Medicine* of Dr. Hood. The author is no "retailer of other men's opinions;" finding no light from books to direct him in his investigation into the causes, nature, and treatment of diseases, he discarded them at once, making nature alone his study. And "from the teachings of the animal economy in post-mortem examinations, and the effect of morbid and remedial agents in clinical observations," he has derived principles that give to the work before us, in which they are embodied, a greater amount of originality than any other that has appeared for a long time can justly claim.

In pathology, the leading position of Dr Hood is, that the source of a numerous class of diseases is an error loci of the abdominal viscera—their being forced, by various causes, from their natural positions.

Upon this simple proposition he has founded an entire system of pathology, explanatory of the causation of nearly all the diseases to which the human organism is liable, "hidden for ages from the wise and skillful" of our profession, and now brought forward in a form designed to enlighten "the obscurity of our science," and take the place of the "fine spun theories" which have heretofore "misled the weak and obscured the pathway of the medical student."

The manner in which Dr. Hood was led to a knowledge of the true pathology of a long list of the most frequent and, heretofore, least manageable diseases the physician is called upon to treat, is at once curious and instructive. We give it in his own words:—

"In the second year of my professional career, I was called to attend a case of bilious colic, and, after exhausting the remedies that are usually applied, the possibility of relief was suggested by reversing the erect position, or suspending, for a few minutes, the patient by the feet. A successful trial in a similar case had been witnessed, and, as the usual remedies in this had failed, I directed the experiment to be made. The patient at the time was covered with a cold clammy sweat, and on the change of position, and immediately after the concussion given by the operators, a quantity of gas escaped—a free alvine discharge was made from the bowels, and in twenty minutes the patient was entirely relieved from the symptoms of colic."

In this *naïf* statement of our author, we perceive the importance of an admonition given, if we recollect right, by Dr. Rush, never to despise the prescription of even an ignorant nurse. It has perhaps been the fruit of much experience, and though often injudiciously administered by unprofessional hands, it may nevertheless become, when carefully adapted to the proper cases and periods of disease, a valuable addition to our remedial agents. Not only has Dr. Hood found that to "invert the body or elevate the hips" is a useful remedy in ordinary constipation, but from the effects of this "heels over head" mode of curing bilious colic, his

mind was directed to a series of inquiries resulting in the pathological discoveries, a synopsis of which is given above. Truly may it be said, in the language of our author, "that if the profession could be made familiar with the natural laws of life, and with the organs, *their position*, and functions, it would lead to a better adaptation of our remedial agents, and a more certain relief to the afflicted."

The causes of disease having been thus traced to displacement of the abdominal organs, "the treatment is simple, as the indications are easily made out."

"One of the most important is to remove the antecedent cause, and restore the displaced organs to their primitive position, and give support to the abdominal muscles, whose normal condition is requisite to maintain their restoration. Mechanical agency, then, being the first indication, medicinal agents may be given in accordance, as the different stages of the disease may indicate."

Dr. Hood has devised a variety of pads, and trusses, and supporters, which had before been never dreamed of, and has applied them to the treatment of a great variety of cases, in which it was never before supposed they could be of any use.

We fear that after all the trouble Dr. Hood has undergone in the composition of these essays, and the pains we have taken to present a sketch of their teachings, to our professional brethren, they will be esteemed as of little value in their sight.

There may be even some who will affect to believe that the essays of Dr. Hood have been written, and his theory of disease invented, solely for the purpose of recommending certain mechanical instruments of support which he has invented, and of which he would fain dispose.

D. F. C.

ART. XXVI.—*The Principles and Practice of Modern Surgery.* By ROBERT DRUITT, F. R. C. S.—*A New American, from the Last and Improved London Edition.* Edited by F. W. SARGENT, M. D., Author of "*Minor Surgery*," &c. Illustrated with 193 wood engravings. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1848: pp. 576, 8vo.

THE fact that this work, in little more than six years, has gone through four editions in England, and we believe a like number in this country, is sufficient evidence that it has met the wants of students and fulfilled the objects of its publication. We must not, however, allow this opportunity to pass without noticing the great improvements introduced into the present edition. The extensive circulation which the work has had, has stimulated the author to renewed exertions to render it more worthy of the favour bestowed on it. "The labour of such a revision as was necessary to bring this edition up to the present level of surgical knowledge," the author states in his preface—"short as has been the interval between it and the preceding edition—has been very little less than that required for the original composition of the work. It is, as Dr. Johnson observed, very difficult to alter without leaving a blot; and therefore, wherever extensive alterations have been required, I have thought it best to write the whole passage afresh." We observe numerous additions to the practical parts of the work, and the introduction of many wood engravings.

The editor has performed his part with judgment. His additions consist of notices of the results of the skill of American surgeons, and the introduction of a very large number of illustrations.

We do not know any other treatise on surgery of the same size which is so copiously illustrated as this, or which contains an equal amount of sound surgical doctrine and practice; and we are sure it will continue to be a favourite text-book with students.