

FOODS AND THEIR ADULTERATION. By HARVEY W. WILEY, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Chemist U. S. Department of Agriculture. Second edition; pp. 641; 98 illustrations. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son & Co., 1911.

IN undertaking to review a book such as Dr. Wiley has written, the reviewer must at the outset confess either to a working knowledge of the subject or to absolute ignorance of the whole field. He pleads guilty to the "soft impeachment" of the latter.

To the reviewer, whose task at the present writing is one laid in pleasant ways, the work is the first of its kind which has come to his notice, and his memory fails to recall an instance where an author has so interestingly developed a table of contents which at first blush seemed so dull. To pretend that, at one reading alone, one is in a position to criticize justly a book of such magnitude were presumptuousness indeed, so that here is recorded nothing more than general impressions.

In the main this second edition follows closely the general lines of its predecessor, except that the rules and regulations for the enforcement of the Food and Drugs Act have been omitted.

The author, we fear, presumes too much on the knowledge of the medical man at least, when he offers "such wide distribution" of these rules as a reason for the omission. For the expert, perhaps, but for the medical world at large, who should certainly possess this book, we feel that the reason is not wholly sound. The place left vacant by the deleting of this very important part of the first edition has been divided between a new section on infants' and invalids' foods and one devoted to simple tests for ordinary adulterations.

These two sections have claimed the reviewer's close attention. The former is valuable, but it is questionable whether its insertion in a book of this nature is a particularly happy choice, inasmuch as the work is dedicated to a consideration of foods and their adulterations. We think the section with which Dr. Wiley has seen fit to replace that spoken of above would find a more appropriate environment in works devoted more especially to dietetics. It adds little to the volume unless the possessor of the latter be of the laity, who wishes in one book to have as complete information regarding foods as possible.

The part on detection of food adulterations is written especially for the great mass of people called the general public, but we fear that Dr. Wiley, in his zeal for the cause of the greatest good to the greatest number, has endowed the general public with unusual intelligence when he says of the "simple tests," that "anyone without the training of the professional chemist" may practise them. We very much fear that not every housewife would make much out of the test, for instance, given on page 611.

This book, which must be regarded as an expression of Dr. Wiley's

monumental governmental activities, is a classic. His great work under the Department of Agriculture is so well known that all classes of people regard the name of "Wiley" as one to conjure by. So great has been his work and so vast his field of endeavor, that few realize concretely just what he has done. With becoming modesty, the writer has submerged himself in his book, but they must be blind, indeed, who cannot see that such a work could not have been written without the brilliant researches of Harvey W. Wiley.

It is a valuable volume for all those interested in the science of foods, and, while not indispensable to the practising physician, should not be overlooked by him if he wishes to keep abreast of a question which is claiming more and more attention from the world at large, more familiarly known as the General Public. E. H. G.

THE NERVOUS LIFE. By C. E. PARTRIDGE, Ph.D., Formerly Lecturer in Clark University. Pp. 216. New York: Sturgis & Walton Company, 1911.

THIS is a first-rate work. Within the last few years there have been many popular books on the different "mental worries" and other nervous phenomena, which, according to their authors, seem to be the burden of the human race. The author approaches his work from the standpoint of both disease and health, and argues that the same principles of living are applicable to both. He first takes up the question of the normal life of the individual and the causes which tend to bring on a nervous condition, and then discusses the cure by normal readjustment through normal living. Dr. Partridge has treated the matter in a thoroughly common-sense fashion, and, after all, there is no higher praise than this.

The reviewer, a neurologist, modestly disagrees with the following: "The day has come when we can no longer go to the doctor to be cured of all our ills. Ills have multiplied faster than the doctor's medicines, and personalities have grown so varied and complex that everyone must, to a certain extent, work out his own salvation. It is, indeed, in the most intimate and personal parts of one's life, where neither physician nor other outsider can be competent to advise, that the most pressing of problems are to be found and the best work of self-study can be done." It is true that ills have multiplied faster than doctors' medicines, but then it must be recalled that the up-to-date physician who understands the modern psychological method of treatment of nervous diseases does not give a medicine for every ill. He knows better. He treats the patient. Again, it is all well enough to state that the most pressing

personal problems must be settled by one's self; but suppose the person is not competent to settle this question by himself, what then? Would it not, after all, be best for the patient with mental ills to go to a competent physician who can show him how to solve these problems?

Even such books as this cannot settle all questions for all persons. As a matter of fact, no better argument can be given for the increase of nervousness than the quantities of books which have been published and the many evils which have arisen. Every day one is confronted with some new "pathy" or new method of curing disease. This is partially because many physicians do not understand or do not realize that to treat nervous diseases one should treat the person, and by treating the person one does not mean giving medicines, but handling the patient psychologically; but the principal reason for the growth of osteopaths, Christian scientists, and others is because human nature, at least so far as the neurologist sees it, is frail. (The reviewer, who is a disciple of Bernard Shaw and incidentally of his "Doctor's Dilemma," does not claim this as an original discovery.) If the doctor were to promise that he could cure every and all diseases as definitely as does the Christian scientist and the osteopath, and if he had the ever-present and most splendidly conceived loop-hole that the Christian scientists have—that is, if one does not get better one does not have sufficient faith—then perhaps we would be on a par with them, but Heaven forbid!

T. H. W.

DIE BEHANDLUNG DER FRAUENKRANKHEITEN. THE TREATMENT OF DISEASES OF WOMEN. By J. VEIT, M.D., Professor and Director of the University Clinic for Women at Halle. Pp. 242; 34 illustrations. Berlin: S. Karger, 1911.

This book begins with an observation so sensible that one wonders that it should be mentioned, and yet so essentially practical and useful that it lies at the foundation of all success in treating the diseases of women. Veit urges that in these cases the patient be treated from the objective standpoint only, and that the subjective element in the case be reduced to the lowest possible terms. When one considers how misleading are the symptoms often reported honestly or otherwise by women, and into what serious error they sometimes lead, this caution will be appreciated.

The book begins by treating of disinfection, the use of instruments and minor methods of treatment before proceeding to the operative side. Veit urges that before examinations strict antisepsis should be observed, a caution which is often neglected. He still seems to have considerable faith in the so-called "local treat-