

THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF GYNECOLOGY. By E. C. Dudley, A.M., M.D., Professor of Gynecology in the Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago. New (3d) edition. Octavo volume of 756 pages, with 474 engravings, of which 60 are in colors and 22 colored plates. 1902. Philadelphia and New York: Lea Brothers & Co. 1902.

THE present revision has transformed this well-known treatise into what is practically a new work, which, admirable as it was before, in its new guise, stands easily at the head of our American literature of practical general gynecology.

The actual number of pages added is 44, and of illustrations 21, but there has been so thorough a revision and rearrangement of the text that about 100 pages of new matter appear, and enough of the older drawings have been discarded to permit the insertion of 25 new engravings and 14 plates without appreciably increasing either the convenient size of the volume or its moderate price. The condensation has been effected mainly by a complete remolding of the sections on Etiology, Pathology, Symptomatology, Physical Signs, Diagnosis and Differential Diagnosis, which, all through the book, have been taken out of the discursive paragraph form and clarified by compact arrangement in tables and parallel columns. In this way extensive additions have been possible, while at the same time the practical usefulness of the book has been greatly enhanced, both for the class-room and for the general practitioner, to whom especially the tables on differential diagnosis should prove of the greatest assistance.

The illustrations throughout are of the highest order, and without exception tell a clear and definite story. An innovation that will be appreciated is the introduction of a series of monochrome plates presenting the successive steps of important operations; for example, hysteromyomectomy and vaginal hysterectomy are respectively shown in 15 plates and 15 drawings.

To advert now to the subject-matter itself, we find it everywhere permeated by a spirit of broad-minded common sense, a sort of radical conservatism that has only the welfare of the patient at heart, and neither entails unnecessary risks from operation nor counsels needless mutilations, while on the other hand the evils of long continued palliative procrastination in serious conditions are no less faithfully described. The application of electricity, for example, in the treatment of endometritis, pelvic peritonitis and myoma is roundly scored by the author, who says in his article on the latter topic that "the survival of the electrical method in gynecology depends chiefly upon the patient's ignorance of its inadequacy and dangers, upon her worship of the mysterious, upon an unreasoning dread of operative measures, and upon a desire to grasp any other promising means of relief." He is no less drastic in his condemnation of that species of per blind office gynecology which can see no further than the interior of the uterus, and pays no heed to the general systemic condition usually underlying the chronic endometritis, and which its caustics and tampons are powerless to heal. "Topical treatment," he says, "should seldom be long continued. It has a more legitimate place as a supplement than as a substitute for systemic and operative treatment. A reproach will be lifted from the medical profession when the indiscriminate use of topical treatment has been relegated to the dark ages of gynecology." It is difficult in a work so replete with interesting matter to select topics for special comment, but the often neglected subject of preparation for operation is especially well discussed, and the author's insistence on the importance of securing a gas-free bowel before laparotomy as the best remedy for postoperative tympanites deserves mention. In the matter of drainage he adopts the modern view and is inclined to reverse the old-time apothegm and say, "When in doubt, don't drain."

Pelvic massage properly done (preferably by a woman) is of great value as an adjuvant to other treatment, and an admirable section with a large number of illustrations is devoted to it. In his discussion of the comparative merits of the vaginal and abdominal routes for pelvic operations the author shows himself reluctant to give up the lower mode of approach, so dear to the gynecologist, since it is one of the hall-marks of his caste; but he finally concludes by admitting that "the vaginal route was for a time much in vogue, but at present among conservative surgeons the tendency is to return to the abdominal route." The author's method of end-to-end approximation of the broad ligaments in hysterectomy and his operation of perineorrhaphy are both based on the soundest principles, although of the latter operation it may be said with truth that every man should do his own.

From every standpoint, therefore, we have nothing but praise for the work so eminently adapted to satisfy student, practitioner and surgeon and which is a credit both to American gynecology and American publishing.