

A MANUAL OF THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

By H. C. MOIR, M.D.

This work is a compilation, and is a good work of its class, but, in our opinion, it will be a bright day for the medical world when the class for which it is written is extinct. If monographs and treatises on medicine come to be entitled studies or treatises on morbid physiology, original thought will be stimulated, principles will be established of value to direct in special exigencies, and routine methods of work branded as distinctly inferior. The idea prevalent among the laity is fostered by such works as this, viz., that the medical man is near akin to the barbers and alchemists of olden times, that he has a definite recipe for every demand, and the idea is covered up that he is practising on the basis of scientific investigation combined with shrewd observation. But if the lame and the halt must abide, the crutch provided by this book is trustworthy and reliable. The book is a catalogue or dictionary of medicine, etiology, symptomatology, and treatment being each considered in a representative style; and it is worthy of especial mention that the therapeutics advised are in accord with most standard authority. But we cannot but think a book incomplete even as a dictionary when we can read, as on page 376, that digitalis is advised in chronic Bright's disease as a diuretic, and yet its properties as a stimulant to the heart and circulation are not dwelt on sufficiently to guide the venturesome practitioner in his watch for the dreaded symptoms of its toxic action; and this instance is cited as typical, in our opinion, of a defect in method of teaching.

CLINICAL LECTURES ON THE PHYSIOLOGICAL PATHOLOGY AND TREATMENT OF SYPHILIS.

By FESSENDEN N. OTIS, M.D., Clinical Professor of Genito-Urinary Diseases in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, etc. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1881. Octavo, pp. xvi, 116.

These lectures originally appeared in the columns of the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*. They are the expansion and amplification of the views of the author published ten years ago, with such modifications as experience has suggested. We can best characterize their scope by quoting a passage from a review (in the *Lancet*) of Dr. Otis's earlier

papers, which he himself adopts: "His views are not based upon the results of any experiments, or new facts, or on the unravelling of observations. They consist mainly of deductions drawn from a close and elaborate reasoning on the acknowledged features of syphilis, in connection with the latest doctrines and hypotheses of certain pathological teachers." Want of space forbids our entering into the details of Dr. Otis's speculations, which must have an interest, however, for every student of—what we may term, in contradistinction to the more routine pickling of diseased organs and cutting and mounting of microscopic specimens—"transcendental pathology." We could wish, however, for a more lucid style, and for the omission of clinical detail, which, though very interesting in itself, distracts the attention from the main course of the argument.

A. V. H.