

Suggestions to Medical Writers. By GEORGE M. GOULD, A.M., M.D. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Medical Publishing Company.

It was a good deed of Dr. Gould to write "Suggestions to Medical Writers." The work must have been brought forth in throes, for he can undoubtedly extract much suffering from what gives the ordinary mortal no twinge. Other editors have suffered with him, perhaps not so keenly, because they did not know enough to be pained at so many points, yet sufficiently to pray that the sales of his book may be large, and that the readers may be lured from cover to cover by his little jokes and sprightly terms. There has been need of a medical rhetoric, speller, and complete essay writer; and it is a praiseworthy act to tell contributors so plainly and simply "not to put pen to paper, unless they have something to say," and to "stop when done."

Dr. Gould has the tools of the literary man in his knowledge of the way words and sentences are made, and in his feeling for the right word to express the idea. These tires literary men usually forge for themselves in the workshop of classic literature; but medical men are usually too busy to evolve or borrow a dictum; so they either blurt forth their facts in bold English, or map their ideas in queerly compounded hybrid words borrowed from several languages. We fear that much of Dr. Gould's logical and forceful remarks on medical writing will not be appreciated by contributors who feel that the mechanism of putting an article into decent type devolves upon the editor himself and not upon the creator of the ideas. But if every right-minded physician who started out to write an article would consult this neat, concise little hand-book, he would find out a well-recognized way to abbreviate his citations to describe his cases, to put in charts and illustrations, to write his titles, and insert his foot-notes. He would also get valuable hints on paragraphing, punctuation, and medical spelling, and would incidentally derive much enjoyment from Dr. Gould's strenuous efforts to reform those who will persist in adding *al* to those words ending in *ic*, as *chronic*, *theoretic*, to make them adjective in form. He says: "In some countries the sheep's tails are so long that they hitch a tiny wagon to each animal, so that it hauls its own caudal extremity. Now, the difference between the sheep and our medical Bo-Peep alpacas is that the words give no valuable wool, and we trail them on the ground behind us, as the ladies do their dress-trains."