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indication for it in the patient’s general condition, or where experience has definitely shown that treatment by mouth or by injection are helpful.

It is a pity that the photography and coloured plates are not on the same high level of achievement as the text. In a moderately-priced text-book, it is too much to expect a profusion of perfect plates in colour, but let us hope that improvements in technique and lowered production costs will soon bring to every dermatological text-book the enormous advantage of really good illustrations in colour photography.

On p. 291, line 32, the last word should be “suspension,” not “suspicion.”

The book ends with nearly forty pages on electrotherapy, X-rays, radium, and the use of carbon dioxide “snow,” in skin diseases. Practitioners will welcome the practical details given, if they have occasion to treat many patients with skin diseases.

Altogether this is a thoroughly practical book, with a wise choice of the things that really matter in dermatology, and the ruthless exclusion of vague theories and potentially dangerous remedies. The book will be enjoyed by those who are dissatisfied with “toxæmia” and “allergy” as the origin of skin diseases of obscure ætiology.

B. L.


It is five years since the last edition of this well-known book was published. The advances made in dermatology since that time have necessitated considerable revision in the contents of the newly published fourth edition. This task has been admirably accomplished by the son of the late author, who has succeeded in bringing the book thoroughly up to date, without disturbing the well-tried and trusted framework of the earlier editions. In particular, a large number of new and successful therapeutic methods make a welcome appearance in the text. The addition of relevant quotations from recent literature and research in dermatology, makes the subject-matter still more interesting and helpful than before. An increase of fifty pages and twenty more illustrations has been required, but the book still remains of handy size, and the price is unchanged and extremely low for such a sumptuously produced and illustrated volume.

There are two excellent introductory chapters, giving some general principles, the assimilation of which will go a long way to ease the path of the beginner in dermatology. Then follow seven chapters which give ample information on the skin diseases due to infection by bacteria, spirochaetes, fungi and filter-passing viruses. The details of treatment are given with admirable clearness, and the lack of redundant or complicated formulæ greatly simplifies the task of
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selecting the appropriate medicament for the patient. The illustrations and coloured plates are very good, especially in the section on tuberculosis. Altogether, this first half of the book is extremely satisfactory, and it is very difficult to think of any fault to find in it. Perhaps a warning on the toxic effects of prontosil and similar compounds could be added where these compounds are quite rightly mentioned in the treatment of erysipelas; even with the small doses advocated, care must be taken that no sulphur-containing compounds are ingested at the same time, or cyanosis and toxic symptoms may develop.

When the author leaves the subject of skin diseases of proven aetiology and embarks on the difficult task of introducing some kind of order among diseases of unknown or unproven origin, his best efforts are bound to dissatisfy some of his readers. Treatment is necessarily empirical, and until a better understanding of the subject is arrived at, the best thing to be done is to bear patiently with all theories, but to avoid thinking exclusively along the lines suggested by any one theory, however plausible. This the author endeavours to do. After an introductory chapter on anaphylaxis and allergy, he discusses very fully, and for the most part with admirable impartiality, a number of skin diseases grouped together in one chapter as "The Erythematous." It would be an advantage if the subdivisions of this chapter could be still more accentuated than they are at present. For example, erythema nodosum could be spaced off from erythema multiforme in a more pronounced way; chilblain and erythema "ab igne" might be raised to the dignity of a sub-heading "erythema due to cold and heat," with erythema solare under its own heading of "erythema due to actinic rays." This would serve to emphasise the important differences between the eruptions grouped for convenience in the one chapter. However, these are details of minor importance in a section which is very interestingly and competently written. There is valuable guidance on the treatment of lupus erythematosus, and on its differential diagnosis.

Succeeding chapters on urticaria, pruritus and prurigo, pemphigus and dermatitis herpetiformis, have been written with a strict regard for the practical aspects of the subject-matter, in that much detail is accorded to the commoner diseases and their treatment, while the rarities receive a summary of the useful facts, with little discussion.

I should like to see Chapter XIV. headed merely "The Purpuras," which is at present a sub-title to the main heading of "Toxic Eruptions of Undetermined Cause, Characterised by Hæmorrhages into the Skin." In purpura due to scurvy, haemophilia, essential thrombocytopenic purpura and many other cases, there is no strong evidence of a toxic factor as the primary cause. Incidentally, the author does not state clearly that scurvy is due to lack of vitamin C, and can occur at any age from improper diet. It is always worth-while administering orange juice or other source of vitamin C in large amount, as recent work has shown that it may be of benefit even when purpura is not definitely of scorbutic origin.

The chapter on drug eruptions is good, but rather short, and phenolphthalein is not mentioned.

Of outstanding merit are the forty pages devoted to dermatitis and eczema, with a host of useful suggestions for treatment, and with

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a clear and capable handling of the difficulties likely to be met with in practice. This chapter is likely to be one of the most appreciated in the book.

The whole field of dermatology has been covered with great competence and skill by an author who has taken great pains to combine the best of the established knowledge in dermatology with the newer but sound observations that deserve to be seriously considered in a modern work. Practitioners will find that this book will not fail them when consulted for information on any skin disease, while the simple and efficient prescriptions, with the avoidance of proprietary preparations, are all that they should be in a text-book written for the practitioner.

B. L.


Probably no conscientious practitioner of medicine is satisfied that there is no room for improvement in the training doctors receive, the conditions under which they serve, the service they are able to render their patients and a host of other details affecting ultimately the fulfilment of society’s duty to provide relief from disability through sickness. Most of those who possess this healthy dissatisfaction must have turned over in their minds ways in which, if they ruled the roost, matters would be improved. Considering that human nature is much the same all the world over and the outlook of American practitioners not very different from ours, most practitioners in this country would find much to interest and instruct them in “American Medicine,” which is a great attempt to assemble in one book the opinions of representative practitioners on medical service from almost every conceivable angle. The work is so large that only a sketch of its origin with the aims of its producers and its scope can be given here. The producers are The American Foundation, a body which, according to the Foreword, was first interested in international law and international relations, and then transferred its enquiries to degrees in which a government can serve its citizens within the limits of the parliamentary system and to the converse—the manner and degree in which the citizen may serve his government. In this field is of course the medical practitioner.

In the enquiry into the organisation of medical care, which resulted in the work under review, the procedure adopted in the first instance was to select as representative a group as possible of practitioners who had been in practice for twenty years or more and invite them to answer an enquiry to the following effect:—

“Has your experience led you to believe that a radical reorganisation of medical care in this country is indicated? If so, in what direction? If you do not believe that radical reorganisation is indicated, what, if any, changes or revisions in the present system would you like to see made? What evolutionary possibilities would you stress?”

The letter containing these questions indicated broadly the points