

to physiological psychology some years ago, we pointed out its value for the English reader as due in part to the fact that Professor Ziehen works along familiar English associational lines, instead of following Wundt, and in part to the fact that, as an alienist who was impelled by the study of abnormal psychology to investigate normal psychology, the author is specially familiar with the needs of the alienist.

Various works on psychology, both original and translated, have appeared in English since then. If we are to judge by the output there must, indeed, be a special demand for such works at the present time; but it cannot be said that Professor Ziehen's work has lost its value. It must, indeed, be said that he is a very cautious, almost an old-fashioned guide; but notwithstanding the activity with which psychologists are now following up many lines of detailed research, it cannot be claimed that on the larger issues they have yet reached any very complete unanimity, so that the most reliable guide is not necessarily the guide who is most ready to follow up the newest paths. Professor Ziehen has, however, as his foot notes show, made some attempt to keep up with recent literature, and he has, in revising the chapter on visual sensations, obtained the assistance of Professor A. König with reference to physiological optics. This fourth edition of his work, in its much enlarged form, may be cordially recommended as a reasonably clear and intelligible statement of physiological psychology on an empiric and associational basis.

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*Uric Acid as a Factor in the Causation of Disease.* By ALEXANDER HAIG, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. 4th edition, with 65 illustrations. London: Churchill, 1897. 8vo, pp. 698. Price 12s. 6d.

When Dr. Haig's book first appeared in 1892, we called attention to the remarkable character and interest of this "contribution" (as the author now terms it on the title-page) "to the pathology of high blood-pressure, headache, epilepsy, mental depression, paroxysmal hæmoglobinuria and anæmia, Bright's disease, diabetes, gout, rheumatism, and other disorders." Since 1892 Dr. Haig has greatly developed and elaborated his main thesis, extending or guarding his positions at many points. The book has doubled in size, and the interest and variety of its contents are greatly increased.

It cannot, however, yet be said that the field Dr. Haig

is so enthusiastically cultivating has been definitely conquered for medical science. He speaks with the fervent conviction of one who has experimented chiefly on himself, and who finds the evidence of his arguments in his own experience. But his work still arouses divided opinions. On the one hand the light which this uric acid theory throws on a number of perplexing conditions has carried conviction to many experienced and sagacious observers (like the late Sir John Bucknill), while, on the other hand, some expert investigators (like Dr. Luff) deny the validity of many of the facts here set forth. It may be added that certain imperfections of method in Dr. Haig's earlier work, together with generalisations that were, perhaps, premature, and in this latest edition certain intemperance of expression with regard to eaters of meat—which he regards as the chief source of uric acid, and therefore the toxic source of innumerable evils—have created in many minds a prejudice not yet broken down by the large amount of work here presented.

Even those, however, who reserve their judgment as to Dr. Haig's main position, must admit the value of his detailed work, and the extreme suggestiveness of many of his observations. He has much to say of the psychic aspects of menstruation in relation to uric acid, which here plays, he considers, a large part. Again, he supplies us with what may be called a physiological theory of the summer rise in the incidence of suicide and crime. We already have the widely prevalent cosmic theory, which attributes this rise to temperature, and Professor Durkheim's recent sociological theory, according to which it is due merely to increased social activity during the long days. Dr. Haig now argues that it may be entirely accounted for by the annual fluctuations in uric acid excretion and the mental state thereby induced. Even the experiences here recorded of the results of special dieting will be found useful, though we may not all be prepared to believe that by feeding criminals on a diet free from uric acid and related substances we should sensibly diminish the prevalence of crime.