

*L'Alcoolisme (Alcoholism.)* By A. JAQUET. Suite de Monographies Cliniques sur les Questions Nouvelles en Médecine, en Chirurgie, en Biologie. (Series of Clinical Monographs on New Questions in Medicine, Surgery, and Biology.) No. 5. Paris: Masson et Cie., 1897, roy. 8vo, pp. 40, fr. 1.25.

The work under notice is a pamphlet in the valuable series of monographs published by Masson et Cie., Paris. It is quite up to the reputation of French literature for scientific insight into the subject with which it deals, and one wonders why we do not have in England anything nearly so good; certainly not from a scarcity of material suitable for investigation. There is nothing to criticise in the brochure. It is a *résumé* of the subject, not explicitly intended as an original contribution; and as a concise study it is wholly admirable. The reviewer's function is only to indicate the scope of the pamphlet.

The introduction is an example of the kind of thing which Archdall Reid properly deploras,—an unnecessary dirge over the ravages of intemperate drinking and the indifference of society—but it only lasts a page. Immediately thereafter we enter upon valuable matter. It is unnecessary to recount the whole scope of the work; it touches upon everything of interest. The question of the intoxicative importance of the various alcohols and of the volatile adjuvants in beverages is well summarised; and the wise conclusion is arrived at that pure ethylic alcohol produces alcoholism, though other alcohols, flavours, and pigments aggravate its effects. Facts are also cited relevant to the importance of the methods of administration of alcohol, the idiosyncrasy of the individual, the constitutional qualities which condition a cumulative effect, and those which, under alcohol, make for or against resistance to disease. In this, the last subject, a good deal is said, and it ushers in a few pages of vital statistics—the relation of alcohol to mortality. The name alcoholism is thus made to refer to the effects in general of alcoholic excess and not exclusively to that state which we usually designate by the name. Discussing the symptoms of alcoholism in the individual, the author, as is usual, treats the subject upside down. (The invariable habit of authors in this regard is quite remarkable.) The visceral complications,—digestive, hepatic, arterial—the sensory and motor symptoms are discussed; then follows an account of the moral, the volitional, defects, as if these were always secondary.

The remedies for alcoholism are lightly but suggestively discussed,—measures applicable to the drunkard, to society, to the trade—and they are well treated. It is characteristic of French authors of this class that they are not content to discuss the nature and the treatment of alcoholism clinically, but must needs preach social reforms at great length—as when one might, in discussing typhoid fever or smallpox, dilate at length upon the social customs which condition these diseases. But here again we have good work.

The brochure can be commended to students of alcoholism and of the drink question as a very good sample of the excellent work which Frenchmen do in this connection, and of a scientific method and point of view which is sadly lacking in the writings of Englishmen and Americans.