

*Drugs and the Drug Habit.* By HARRINGTON SAINSBURY, M.D., F.R.C.P. London: Methuen and Co. 8vo., pp. 307. Price 7s. 6d.

This book is a welcome addition to medical literature, for it is written in a style that is attained by few of the recent works on medical matters. It is not a mere compilation of facts and ideas relating to the subject, but a careful, thoughtful, and philosophically reasoned exposition, of large information, well digested. It is written in excellent English, with admirable clearness of expression and logical sequence of statement. The literary embellishment gives evidence of wide reading illuminated by a broad grasp of cognate scientific subjects.

The book commences with an admirable historical sketch, followed by chapters on definitions, the objective of drugs, the rational and psychic basis of drug treatment, etc., ending with chapters on habit control, uncontrolled habit, preventive and curative treatment. The historical sketch is particularly excellent, and many of the chapters are admirable both for the matter and the clearness of exposition.

The author has, moreover, kept rigidly—in some respects too rigidly—to his thesis, and this might induce some critics to consider him too much wedded to his subject in the practical treatment of disease.

Dr. Sainsbury's concept of disease, however, sometimes appears to be too much that of an entity; it is certain that he does not really regard it as such, but in his illustrations he nearly approaches this attitude, and fails to emphasise the fact that the manifestations of disease are merely physiological processes in excess or defect.

The equation of disease as  $= A + B + C + D + x$  does not take into consideration the altered values of  $A, B$ , etc., with which  $x$ , although the cause, has nothing to do; similarly the drug  $y$  is credited with merely countervailing  $x$ , without relation to its effects in restoring or (as is too often the case) still further disturbing the relations of the physiological processes  $A, B$ , etc.

This leads naturally to a far too great trust in the treatment of symptoms.

Dr. Sainsbury, indeed, sees so much of the good and alludes so little to the disadvantage of drugs that it suggests the old quotation, "*de mortuis*."

One excursion is made beyond the drug area in the chapter on "ideation" which is very able, and, on the whole, satisfactory.

Knowing how difficult it is to get patients to relinquish the bad habits which have produced their disorder or to adopt hygienic procedures, and how they will swallow a remedy and persist in their evil habits, is it not much more important and right to attach the mental assurance, which a physician should always give, to the former rather than to the latter, and to explain the real value of prescription futilities? If the patient is so ignorant that a drug fetish is really needed, is it not better to apply it, "more Africano," to the outside of the abdominal wall, rather than in our "civilised" fashion to inflict it on the long-suffering mucous membrane of the intestinal tract? Should we not always insist, even when the drug is not a mere futility, on the necessity for abandonment

of bad habits, rather than encourage trust in the drug, which only temporarily countervails their evil effects?

The author, in his closing paragraph, insists that drugs are natural forces, and implies that therefore they must be good. Everything in Nature may be so regarded, but it becomes a "drug" only when it affects the physiological processes in a manner that is not merely nutritional, and the question is, not whether they come direct from Nature or are prepared by art, but whether their physiological effect is for good or ill?

The concluding chapters on habit show that, in spite of long suffering, probably every drug has an ill effect. Drug-treatment resolves itself, therefore, into the question of how much evil may be done that good may ensue.

We commend the book to our readers as both interesting and valuable, and as a brilliant addition to medical literature.

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*The Relation of Medicine to Philosophy.* By R. O. MOON, M.A., M.D.Oxon. 8vo., pp. 221. London: Longmans & Co., 1909. Price 4s. 6d.

Three chapters of this book have already appeared in the *British Medical Journal*, and the author, although he does not profess to have produced a history of medicine such as that of Haesen, Withrington or Kurl Springel, may be congratulated on having produced a very finished sketch from his chosen point of view.

The first three chapters are devoted to the relation to Greek philosophy. Then follow chapters on the influence of early Christianity, of Arab philosophy, on the various influences of the middle ages, of the renaissance, and of Paracelsus, concluding with studies of the effect of philosophy on medicine in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and of the thought of the present time.

Without any attempt at criticism in detail, the opinion may be expressed that the task of Dr. Moon has been most ably executed, as well in its literary finish as in the comprehensive grasp of the subjects treated. In his final paragraph he says that "now it will be rather the custom for philosophy to come to medicine, and taking from her all the truths which through the ages she has been slowly recovering from ignorance and chaos, gather them up into one vast generalised truth which will enable men to lead the lives of intellectual and moral beings." This is the keynote of the spirit in which the book is written.

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*Die Gehirnoberfläche von Paralytischen* [*The Brain Surface in General Paralysis*]. By PROFESSOR NÄCKE. Leipzig: Vogel, 1909. Pp. 58, large 4to.

Professor Näcke here brings, with his usual laborious care, a contribution to his study of the morphology of general paralytics from a new side. The work is mainly an atlas of forty engraved plates (after drawings) of the brain surfaces of forty-nine general paralytics, mostly represented in natural size. The author furnishes an introduction and