rat-bite fever (a quite common disease in India) a fourth example. (It seems rather a pity in this connection that the author appears to have consulted no literature more recent than that of 1919; there has been much more recent work on the disease.) *Hymenolepis diminuta* infections are also rat-transmitted, and meliodiosis, a glanders-like disease, is also suspected of such transmission. On pp. 31 and 32 is given an imposing list of the natural ecto- and endo-parasites of rats, protozoal, helminthic, entomological and bacterial.

Of natural enemies of the rat, the cat comes first, but is usually too well fed and looked after to be of much use. The barn owl and kestrel are probably more useful. The author discusses the Rodier system; this suggests the universal trapping of rats; that all captured females should be destroyed, but all captured males again let loose. If by this means the natural excess of females over males were to be replaced by an excess of males over females, the rat population would destroy itself. The method is of great interest as a suggestion of a method of biological control, but, we fear, impracticable in practice.

Chapters on how to kill rats, flooding and smoking, ferreting, and trapping, follow. The last is of special value, and the value of almost every different type of trap is discussed, also when to use them and when not. Chapter X deals exhaustively with rat poisons. Very numerous prescriptions are given, and details on how to prepare and lay baits. Virus control is then discussed; this has been put forward chiefly of recent years by the researches of Jensen in Copenhagen. Most viruses at present in use are harmless to animals other than rats, whilst Raebiger in 1928 in Germany claims that 98.6 per cent. of village, town and farm plots had been freed from rats by the extensive use of virus. Details are quoted on p. 83 of the book.

Further chapters follow on the special measures necessary to deal with rats in different situations, in farms and outbuildings, in factories and warehouses, in sewers, and in ships. There is here much sound writing and useful, detailed, advice. Suggested measures—largely of legislative type—are discussed, and a final chapter on deratisation concludes the book, and includes several quotations from the daily press. The volume is not indexed.

The Rat, a World Menace is a book which should make a very special appeal to medical men in India. At present our measures against the rat in India are but half hearted, whilst the killing of even such a pest as the rat is discouraged by religious prejudice. Education, above all, is necessary, and in this volume the public health propaganda worker, the special plague officer, and the general medical worker in India will find much of both interest and importance. It is well written, commendably brief, and well published. We hope that it will be appreciated by a wide circle of readers in this country.

R. K.

THE WRITING OF MEDICAL PAPERS.—By Maud H. Mellish-Wilson, Editor of the Mayo Clinic Publications. Third edition, revised. Pp. 184. 1929. W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia and London: Price, 7s. 6d.

DOCTORS may excel in their own profession, but, almost without exception, they are very bad authors. An article submitted to a medical journal for publication should be brief, well written, succinct, and ready for press with but a few slight alterations. Yet, in the case of this journal at least, the majority of papers received and published have not merely to be corrected, but re-modelled and re-written. We can wish ourselves no better fate than that every one of our regular contributors should buy a copy of this small and most useful little book, and study it. Apart even from the question of style, there are certain usages in scientific publications, such as the methods of constructing a bibliography, which the medical profession badly needs to learn. "The artist uses whatever material and whatever forces he

finds at hand, but he does not allow himself to be mastered by them. And when he has finished his work, he does not fall down before it. He looks at it critically, he sees its limitations, and he plans a new work which he hopes may surpass it," quotes the author from Crothers.

The subject matter of the book is arranged in two parts, the first seven chapters being devoted to technical details, and the last thirteen to general instructions. Good usage, vocabulary, the use (and misuse) of italics, the use of abbreviations, the construction of tables, punctuation, grammatical notes, and a splendid chapter on "don'ts" comprise the first part. Then come chapters on arrangement, the preliminary drafted outline of the paper, construction, case histories, references, revision, title, and volume of output.

The last named subject is all-important. Mr. Clifford Dobell, F.R.S., once told the reviewer in conversation that his criterion of the value of a medical paper was whether it would be either read or consulted a hundred years hence. Judged by such a standard, nine-tenths of present-day medical literature might well be sieved out, and the grain separated from the chaff. To quote the author of this book "many of the journals now in existence are a discredit to the profession, and there is also the deplorable fact that their doubtfully valuable contents must be included in our already overcrowded indexes." To publish twelve papers a year should constitute professional malpraxis, and there are authors who write far too much and far too frequently.

The succeeding chapters deal with the manuscript, the proof, quoted material, and the index. A most valuable list of the standard abbreviations for medical journals occupies 48 pages, and a good index completes the volume.

Everywhere the instructions are clear, well expressed, and admirable. Each chapter commences with an apt quotation, and ends with *obiter dicta*. This valuable little book has gone through three editions in seven years. We can express our appreciation of it best by hoping that it will see many more editions, and that it will make a special appeal to our contributors. Surely it is not too much to ask of the author who sits down to write a paper for publication that he should make a preliminary study of style and good usage.

One of our chief difficulties in India, which the author has not encountered in America, is the "capitalist." The Indian typist cannot keep away from capitals; for example if the paper deals with malaria, this word is always written Malaria. A second special difficulty in India is the abbreviationist; he will invariably write pt. for patient, m.p. for malaria parasite—whereas it might just as well stand for military policeman; and T. B. for tuberculosis.) If we can remember to do so, we promise to send the author of this book a typical script, as received by us, after correction. She might decide to incorporate a page of it in her next edition as an example of "how not to do it"!

R. K.

THE AMERICAN ILLUSTRATED MEDICAL DICTIONARY.—By W. A. Newman Dorland, A.M., M.D., F.A.C.S. Fifth edition (1929), revised and enlarged. Pp. 1427. Profusely illustrated. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Co. Price, thumb Indexed 37/6; plain 35/-.

We have reviewed previous editions of this invaluable work. It is not a "dictionary," but an encyclopædia; in brief it is almost the medical *Encyclopædia Britannica* for the physician and medical author and editor. It is admirably printed, profusely illustrated, extremely well bound with a limp morocco binding.

In its present edition this most valuable work has received the most thorough revision of its long career, dating from 1901. A large corps of associate workers has combed the literature of the two years since its last new edition in 1927, with the result that several thousand new terms have been added. Careful revision has been given to the wording of every definition in the work. The terms in anatomy, pathology, physiology and physical therapy have received special attention. A

definite standard has been adopted in terminology, spelling, hyphenization, etc.

The entire book has been re-edited by the editorial staff of the American Medical Association, whilst Dr. E. C. L. Miller, Professor of Bacteriology and Biochemistry in the Medical College of Virginia, has collaborated with the author in the revision. The new edition has been reset from new type, and many illustrations added. That it is very fully up-to-date is obvious from a perusal of its pages.

The standard spelling adopted is, of course, American, rather than British. Under *fœtus*, for instance, we are referred to *fetus*; under *Entameba*—synonym, *horribile dictu*, *Entameba*—to the still worse *Endameba*. These violations of etymology are inherent in the American language; and the English reader can only be grateful that the older and more correct forms are still given for reference. It would be easy, but unprofitable, to try to pick holes in what is a splendid and invaluable work of reference.

The arrangement is excellent, and the illustrations—especially the full page colour plates—are very good. We are sorry that opposite p. 953 the colour plate of the malaria parasites still shows these important organisms in their unstained condition; surely such a method of examination is now never practised in the tropics; and a new plate showing the appearance of the parasites in Romanowsky stained films is wanted. *Plasmodium kytoplastokon* is new to us; it is Schiller's supposed protozoal protozoan parasite of cancer (and might well be left to disappear into obscurity).

These very minor criticisms do not in any way detract from the sterling value of this monumental work. A copy of the new edition should be in every medical library in India. A specially valuable feature of the work is that pronunciations are given throughout, and also Greek derivations; this adds very greatly to the value of the work.

R. K.

REPORT OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE FAR EASTERN ASSOCIATION OF TROPICAL MEDICINE. British India. Dec. 5th.-10th.-24th, 1927. Calcutta, Government of India Press, 1929.

The full *Transactions* of this Congress are in course of publication, and Vols. I and II of these *Transactions* have already appeared, and have been reviewed in our columns.

The present small volume, however, is different. It is a summary of information connected with the Congress, and most useful for reference, and to gain a general idea of the Congress. No price is mentioned, but we presume that the volume is obtainable from the official agents for government publications.

The book opens with a list of officers of the Congress and Council; then follows a brief and useful resumé of the proceedings of the Congress, with abstracts of papers and discussions. The opening addresses are given verbatim, and the agenda and minutes of the official business meetings. An account of the different tours made by foreign delegates in India comes next; then the report of the committee on beriberi, Philippine Islands. A complete list of members of the Association occupies some sixty pages, and will be found most useful for reference. The volume closes with the articles and by-laws of the Association.

We have dealt in such detail with this Congress that we need not further dilate upon the present volume. It will be found generally useful, both for reference, and as a resumé of the Congress.

BRONCHIAL ASTHMA—ITS DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.—By H. L. Alexander, A.B., M.D. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1929. Pp. VII plus 171 with 8 figures in the text. Price, 10s. 6d. net.

The subject of asthma has been approached from so many viewpoints and such an enormous amount of literature has grown around it, that it is indeed difficult for an average medical man interested in the subject to form a clear idea of the main issues involved. The various

causative factors, be they infection, psychic disturbance, nasal irritation, allergy or mechanical irritation of the bronchi, have been stressed by various authors with so much warmth and emphasis that a broad conception of the subject—that it is something more than an effect resulting from a single process—is seldom fostered in the minds of the readers. "Bronchial Asthma," by H. L. Alexander, presents the problem of asthma in a crystallised and condensed form and hence may be expected to make a strong appeal to the minds of medical men. The handy size of the book (a monograph of about 160 pages) is another point in its favour. Without attempting to enter into minute details, the lines of treatment have been admirably indicated. The appendix at the end of the book lays down the common diagnostic methods, and the bibliography at the end of each chapter gives valuable references.

R. N. C.

THE EYE IN GENERAL MEDICINE.—By Dr. Maitland Ramsay, M.D., LL.D. Second Edition of *Diathesis and Ocular Diseases*. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1929. Pp. X plus 255. Price, 12s. 6d. net.

THIS is the second edition of the author's "Diathesis and Ocular Diseases," and has been entirely re-written and re-arranged and is now published under its present name. The book is not a systematic textbook of ophthalmology, but a personal record of the author's long clinical experience of morbid conditions of the eye in relationship to general disease. The contents consist of ten chapters which are complete in themselves on various diseases in which the eye plays an important part. The author points out how essential it is to bridge over the gap between specialism and general medicine. The principles of general physiology are sufficiently broad to include every organ of the body and it is the same physiological and pathological processes which are at work. The ophthalmologist must be first and foremost a doctor, familiar with general medical principles, and must realize that the cause of the disease is not necessarily to be found in the organ manifesting the symptoms, and no treatment can be successful until the cause underlying the disease has been discovered and removed. General medicine owes much to ophthalmology, and how often in one's clinical experience have signs of serious general disease been discovered by lesions in the eye such as diabetes, nephritis and cardio-vascular disease, and it is important that the general practitioner should have a knowledge and take an interest in the diseases of the eye.

The author is dogmatic in his teaching and presents his articles in a clear and convincing fashion and written in a simple style. The book makes very delightful reading and will prove of great interest not only to the ophthalmologist but to the general practitioner. We cordially recommend it to our readers.

E. O'G. K.

SKIN: ITS USES IN SIX PHASES.—By Lewis E. Hertslet. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1929. Pp. XVIII plus 206. Illustrated. Price, 10s. 6d. net.

THIS book has been written by an enthusiast obsessed with the value of light as a curative of all diseases. Unfortunately in the tropics we often suffer from the effects of too much light, and there is a well known Arab proverb that only Englishmen and fools prefer the sunlight to the cool shade.

In spite of the enthusiasm of the author, the book contains a mass of facts dealing with the skin from the different aspects. The work has been written from the popular point of view, and should appeal to those who are interested in this subject.

H. W. A.

ON PRESCRIBING PHYSICAL TREATMENT.—By Matthew B. Rav, D.S.O. M.D. (Edin.). London: William Heinemann (Medical Books) Ltd. 1929. Pp. IX plus 179. Illustrated. Price, 10s. 6d. net.

The author states in his introduction that "This book is written entirely from the standpoint of the prescriber, and is not intended to be anything in the nature of a