

devoted to tetany as an accompaniment of dilatation of the stomach, and a more hopeful view is expressed regarding the prognosis than that adopted by previous writers.

The last chapter, dealing with the various operations performed on the stomach, is chiefly valuable for the account given of the method of gastro-enterostomy as performed by the authors. Robson pins his faith to the posterior operation associated with the name of von Hacker, but modified in several useful details by himself. His experience, that it is never followed by the *circulus vitiosus*, is of great value, for it does away with the necessity of the additional entero-anastomosis which is so frequently practised by Mikulicz and other continental surgeons.

ALEXIS THOMSON.

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*Epilepsy and other Chronic Convulsive Diseases: their Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment.* By Sir WILLIAM R. GOWERS, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. Second Edition. London: J. & A. Churchill.

THE well-known work upon epilepsy and associated disorders by Sir William Gowers, in this, the second edition, is a replica of the first in name and character only; every part of it has been subjected to revision, many parts rewritten, and much new matter added. That the revision must needs have entailed a large amount of careful labour, is attested by the fact that 3000 separate cases now form the source from which the statistical data included are derived, in place of the 1450 cases of the preceding edition. Of these 3000 patients, 52 per cent. were female, 48 per cent. male; of the first series the females formed 53·4 per cent., the males 46·6 per cent. of the total 1450; in the additional 1550, 50·7 per cent. were females, 49·3 per cent. males. A large number of important points are illustrated statistically, either from the total cases, or from varying, but always large numbers, in a few of the more special items.

After an introductory chapter, the etiology of epilepsy is discussed in all its bearings; the next three chapters are devoted to symptomatology. Then, in turn, organic epilepsy, hystero-epilepsy, morbid associations of epilepsy (heart disease, chorea, myoclonus multiplex, and migraine), its course, pathology, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, and surgical treatment, are treated of in successive chapters.

The volume comes from so great an authority upon nervous diseases that it scarcely requires further commendation than such a statement.

The underlying motive of the work, consisting in the descriptive while statistical study of a large number of cases actually observed by the author, the different points connected with epilepsy, have necessarily to be, and in the majority of instances are, discussed in turn in relation to the results shown by the series.

It seems a pity that there are no more comprehensive tabular presentments of the main facts derived from the observations on the 3000 cases. Several small tables there are, indeed, each illustrating some separate point. One or two combined tables, whereby different factors could at once be compared and contrasted, would add to its value. For instance, details of sex, age, etc., not alluded to in con-

nection with many of the different divisions of the subject in the text, might easily be shown by such means, and this to advantage.

Another thing which perhaps might have been enlarged upon at greater length, is the subject of alcoholic fits, both epileptiform and epileptic; even although only in 29 of the 3000 was alcohol apparently the primary agent. It is a work which profits one to read; which incorporates a valuable analytic study of epilepsy by a master of the subject; and is a monument to the energy and perseverance of its author.

A. LOCKHART GILLESPIE.

*Diseases of the Thyroid Gland and their Surgical Treatment.* By JAMES BERRY, F.R.C.S. London: J. & A. Churchill.

IN the preface to his book Mr. Berry says: "I trust that those who read the book will deal gently with it, and remember that it is an honest attempt to set forth as clearly and concisely as possible what is known by myself and others about a difficult and somewhat obscure branch of surgery."

Readers of the book will think this a modest estimate of what is one of the best surgical monographs that has been written. The book throughout bears the impress of thorough, careful work, done by an able, experienced, and enthusiastic surgeon, who can form and express clearly the opinions which his exceptional experience and skilful use of it have led him to adopt. The following is a sample of the manner in which each portion of the subject has been treated. After discussing fully the conditions said to give rise to goitre, and going over each claim advanced, and the reasons why it should or should not be accepted, the chapter ends thus:—

"Summing up, there can be no doubt that climatic and atmospheric conditions have little or no share in the causation of goitre. That want of air and sunshine has absolutely nothing whatever to do with it is equally certain. Habits, such as carrying weights on the head, violent exertion, and the like, play but a secondary part in the production of the disease. That heredity is a cause of goitre is extremely doubtful. Inter-marriage has certainly no share in its causation.

"That there exists some definite relation between endemic goitre and some poison in the soil upon which it is found, is tolerably clear, and there can be no doubt that in the vast majority of cases drinking-water is the vehicle by means of which that poison obtains access to the body. Such water is usually, if not always, derived from calcareous soils, but it is probable that the goitre-producing poison is not a salt of lime or magnesia. It has not yet been proved satisfactorily that any salt of iron is the essential constituent. The same may be said of micro-organisms."

Chapter I. deals with the anatomy of the thyroid gland. The presence of a distinct though delicate capsule investing the gland is emphasised as an important surgical fact. This is of more than usual interest to us, as we can recall that more than a quarter of a century ago the same knowledge was the foundation of the pioneer work of Dr. Patrick Heron Watson, who introduced the modern safe operation for removal of the thyroid gland.