

Reviews.

A Manual of Obstetric Nursing. By Marian Humfrey (Sampson, Low, Marshall & Co.). This is one of the most important works upon this subject which has been yet published. It was originally issued in serial form through the pages of the NURSING RECORD, and many of our readers therefore are probably familiar with its value and usefulness, and will be glad to obtain the book in its present form. It may be described shortly, as eminently practical, written, as it is, by one who, for years, has worked in connection with one of the most important Provincial Lying-In Charities, and who, therefore, speaks with authority and knowledge of facts which she has seen and observed in her daily work. The one, and only one, cause of regret in this book is, that, although it extends to 280 pages, a considerable portion of matter which appeared in our columns has, we observe, been omitted—a fault which, we trust, will be remedied in future editions, because all that Miss Humfrey has written on the subject is so valuable that it cannot be left out, with advantage to the reader. Throughout the pages, there are practical hints which, we believe, will prove of extreme usefulness to the public as well as to monthly nurses. The writer does not pretend to give technical explanations for the causes of the various diseases with which the Monthly Nurse may be confronted, but restricts herself to concise and eminently practical descriptions of how the various conditions of danger after labour may be averted, or how they may be nursed if they arise. In this, we cannot but feel that she has done wisely, because the standing complaint against works of this class written by real, or assumed, Nurses, is that they deal with matters such as prescriptions and medical disquisitions which the writers are obviously unable to understand themselves, and which, therefore, they only confuse their readers by pretending to explain. As we have said, the book is eminently practical from beginning to end, and we should require more space than we have at our disposal were we to attempt to adequately prove this by extracts from the text. There is, however, one point upon which we so cordially agree with the authoress, that we cannot refrain from quoting her words. She is speaking of perchloride of mercury as an antiseptic, and says, "There are two ways of using it, in loose powders that the Nurse can dissolve from time to time to make her antiseptic lotion; or prepared in glycerine to a strength of which one drachm of the solution

makes one pint of antiseptic lotion. I strongly recommend the latter, firstly, because you secure a *perfect solution* of the crystal, an important point; secondly, a bottle of poison can be better guarded and kept out of harm's way than loose powders. We must bear in mind that the lying-in room is open to all comers—relations, children, servants, visitors. In cases of other sickness, the sick-room may be shunned, but in our portion of nursing work, it is often a matter of the greatest difficulty to keep people out, and a *loose* powder would put a Nurse into a very uncomfortable state of mind. Whatever might be the form in which perchloride of mercury were introduced into the lying-in room, I should strongly deprecate its being introduced into my patients as a vaginal douche, more especially if it were frequently repeated; nor can I think it well for a Nurse to be dipping her hands at least a dozen times in the day in a solution of mercury, for ten or fifteen days at a stretch."

Miss Humfrey possesses an admirable fund of dry humour; her description of Sairey Gamps as making themselves "equally available for lyings-in and layings-out" certainly deserves repetition.

We cordially recommend nurses, especially those engaged in obstetric work, to obtain this standard book, and study it most carefully.

"Homes and Hospitals, etc., for the Benefit of Gentlewomen." (Third edition. Army and Navy Co-operative Society. One Shilling).—This useful pamphlet has been compiled by Miss Meinertzhagen, of Wimbledon, Surrey, and the fact that it has reached a third edition conclusively proves that it has met a real want. For those desiring to know where to obtain lodgings in permanent homes, or to learn where Free Homes and Homes of Rest are to be found, or where help can be obtained in sickness, this book will be very useful. From a professional point of view we regret to notice that a Mattei Electro-Homœopathic Home and Dispensary should receive prominent notice, especially as this is given in close proximity to information concerning a reputable Medical Aid Society. The composition of the Mattei Remedies has been sufficiently exposed to make it, in our opinion, very undesirable that it should obtain even the appearance of such sanction and commendation to the unwary or the ignorant. It is interesting to observe what a considerable number of funds appear to exist for the special benefit of widows and orphans of clergymen. No less than 21 societies are mentioned or named in this little brochure, and it compels one to wish that similar societies existed for the benefit of medical men.

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