

RETROSPECT OF CURRENT LITERATURE.

Medicine.

UNDER THE CHARGE OF JAMES STEWART.

Two Years of Serum Treatment of Diphtheria.

CUNO ; Frankfort-on-the-Main. "Zwei Jahre Diphtherie-heil-serumtherapie"—*Deutsche Medicinische Wochenschrift*, Dec. 12th, 1896.

The favourable reports on the results of serum therapy in diphtheria are accumulating and the review of the cases here reported makes the evidence in favour of the new treatment so much the stronger. It is thus that any new remedy is tested and thousands of cases are needed whereby there may be eliminated all possible sources of error.

Particularly interesting are the figures which Dr. Cuno presents, summarizing the cases during six years previous to that in which the serum treatment was begun, and which he contrasts with those of the two following years, 1895 and 1896, or more accurately from October, 1894 to October, 1896. The six years previous show a death rate of 37 to 38 per cent., 1510 cases having undergone treatment.

In the two years herein reported upon 483 cases were treated and 51 died. A death rate of 10.5 per cent.

It seems fair to the treatment but perhaps not just, so far as statistics go, to deduct from the number of those dead five who were admitted moribund and died within 20 hours, and twelve who died from other causes, the diphtheria having been healed. Thus the surprisingly low death rate of 7.03 per cent. is reached.

It is interesting in this connection also to note that in these cases all local treatment was omitted and only such treatment applied in addition to the serum, as seemed indicated, such as stimulant measures, and in cases of nephritis, hot-air bath, etc. The method of using the serum differed in no important manner from that in other hospitals.

Laryngeal diphtheria was found in 125 cases, 71 of whom recovered