

DISORDERS OF DIGESTION IN INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD. By W. Salton Fenwick, M.D., B.S., London, member of the Royal College of Physicians, physician to out-patients at the Evelina Hospital for Sick Children : H. K. Lewis, London. Pp. 377, demy 8 vo. 6s.

There is no lack of text-books on diseases of children, and in all much attention is paid to the subject of infant feeding and to the derangements of digestion, which are of so frequent occurrence during the infant period. The volume before us is devoted entirely to the consideration of these subjects and, as might be expected, they are more elaborately treated than in the general works on diseases of children.

The author has had wide experience, having studied 5,000 cases of dyspepsia in children at the Evelina Hospital. This work was supplemented by pathological work in the laboratories of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons.

The opening chapters deal with the anatomy and physiology of the stomach in the young infant. The author points out that in the first six months the solitary glands in the stomach are small and ill-defined. After this period, however, they undergo rapid development, until about the age of ten years five or six are found in every sq. centimeter. After this they gradually lessen, so that after forty years they are almost gone. Another anatomical fact made prominent is that the muscular tone of the stomach does not attain its full degree of development until about the tenth month.

The physiology of stomach digestion in the infant has been carefully studied. It was found that in infants fed on farinaceous foods the total acidity is invariably diminished to as much as one-half. The same children, when fed with milk exhibited the normal hydrochloric acid secretion. Objection is taken to the statement that the stomach in the infant is merely a reservoir. Excess of free hydrochloric acid is seldom observed, and as a result bacteria are more likely to flourish. This probably explains the extreme frequency of gastro-intestinal infection in the young.

Concerning micro-organisms the author quotes Van Puteren, who found that in artificially fed infants there were about twenty times as many bacteria as in breast-fed children.

Chapter II. is devoted to diet. Breast-feeding is first considered ; variations in quality and quantity of the mother's milk are described. Many conditions affect harmfully the mammary secretion. Most complete rules for nursing are given and the importance of feeding at regular intervals is urged. The author opposes strongly the adoption of artificial food, and would exhaust every expedient to adapt the milk to the child's digestion before making a change.

Artificial feeding follows next, and here the author is quite in harmony with Rotch, Holt, and other authorities on the subject, in ignoring completely the many patent foods in favor of cow's milk received while fresh and modified so that it closely resembles the mother's milk. The care of the animals, cleanliness, and attention to sanitation, which is seen