

REVIEWS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

XLI—*The Transactions of the American Medical Association.* Vol. 9. 1856. Pp. 907. Philadelphia: T. K. & P. G. Collins. Price 15s.

In this volume Professor Hamilton continues his report on "*Deformities after fractures*" commenced in the last, or eighth, volume of transactions, and purposes completing it in a third paper for the next year's volume. The subject is one of great importance to the practical surgeon; one, moreover, that has hitherto been handled, when at all adverted to, with the greatest delicacy by surgical writers, the general rule being, a studious avoidance on their part of all reference to anything so unpleasant as failure in the treatment of fractured bones. The talented and energetic Professor, conscious that the complete success promised to the careful practitioner, in the event of his adopting certain orthodox methods of treatment, was not always attainable, determined to sift the matter to the very bottom, and by careful measurements at the end of treatment of all cases of fractures coming beneath his own immediate notice and that of his friends, endeavor to establish something approximating to a correct prognosis in these accidents. There is no doubt that he has entered on his labour *con amore*, and he richly deserves the thanks of his professional brethren everywhere, for the honest boldness with which he prosecutes his task. To the American surgeon who is now liable, at any time, to be subjected to a ruinous suit for damages, in consequence of a slightly shortened or inefficient limb remaining after treatment, the determination of the question at issue is of the greatest moment. For if it be satisfactorily proved, and the public generally are made aware of the fact, that notwithstanding the present advanced state of surgical science, and the number and variety of appliances now in use; notwithstanding, moreover, the utmost care and attention on the part of the attending surgeon, fractured limbs are not only *occasionally* but *frequently* incompletely cured, no greedy soulless patient will have the slightest chance of succeeding in mulcting his unfortunate doctor in a sum that is even too large to be paid for the patient's entire carcass.

"I propose" says Dr. H. in his preface, "to deduce from my own experience, and from the experience of other surgeons, as recorded in this report, the true prognosis of fractures. This I shall endeavour to do with care and fidelity, avoiding, on the one hand, if possible, the error of encouraging the practitioner with a prognosis too favourable, and, on the other, the equal wrong of leading him to expect too little. It is