

described are, of course, minor in character, and the book is worth purchasing, if for use by those who want a well-written outline of gynecology as a whole.

*The Medical Review.* 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.  
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The rapid advance of modern medicine is accompanied by a vast and constantly increasing periodical literature. But the majority of the articles consist largely of common-place remarks, useless verbiage, old doctrine—stated far better in text-books—and crude and doubtful opinions. Much space also is devoted to topics so specialized that they have but little interest or value for the general practitioner. On the other hand, matters of great interest—exceptional and instructive cases, successful treatment by methods not generally known, and valuable observations on unrecognized aspects of disease, which would often solve the difficulties in the daily work of the practitioner—are scattered through the medical journals of the world and lost to the bulk of the profession.

Most journals, it is true, give, as secondary to their original matter, a few pages of brief abstracts of papers which are supposed to be the most important in their contemporaries. But the result is unsatisfactory. Such abstracts generally have an obvious and fundamental fault. Definite progress is not sufficiently distinguished from the indefinite, crude, and unproved opinions of individuals with which medical literature is so much encumbered. Or, again, too much knowledge is taken for granted, and subjects of interest only to the specialists are selected. A constantly changing kaleidoscope of so-called "views" and "conclusions," devoid of both interest and utility, is presented to the practitioner. Further, want of discrimination in the selection of articles is associated with an equal want of discrimination in their summarizing. When, perchance, a valuable article is selected space is wasted on common-place remarks and bibliographical matter which do not in the least enlighten the reader, whilst the essential points are not fully and clearly set forth in due relation. Thus much of the utility and interest of the original is lost. As a result the ordinary epitome is worthless to the practitioner and is not taken seriously; often it is not even read.

Hence the need of a concise yet comprehensive review of the facts in medical literature that are really important. It is quite possible by the careful use of words and the suppression of all unessential matter to compress an article written with any definite object—and such alone is valuable—into a comparatively brief report, and yet to give a complete, readable, and satisfactory account of the subject, so that nothing of importance is lost, and,