

years. Of its importance too much cannot be said—without it all descriptions of the component parts of the body must be merely conjectural, and from it alone can an insight be obtained into the mechanism through which the individual functions are accomplished. Its inquiry is one of intense interest, and the ardent student will find few subjects better calculated for awakening that lively curiosity which is the motive spring to action, and for enlisting those intellectual exertions which are the sure harbingers of success.

Mr. Hassall's work consists of two volumes, one of text the other of plates.

The volume of text contains as complete an account of Microscopy as the present state of the science admits. The author has been at great pains to avail himself of the many valuable contributions, that up to the date of publication, had been given to the world both by English and Foreign observers. Viewed in the light of a compilation, it will be found to be a faithful and succinct account of all that is known upon the many subjects to the discussion of which it is devoted. For this reason its value cannot be too highly stated, and it enjoys the enviable pre-eminence of being the only separate work which embodies the results of the labours of the various observers in the important field of inquiry, which it describes—these results, before its time, having been scattered through different "handbooks" and "manuals" of descriptive anatomy and general physiology. As an illustration of the nature and novelty of the information conveyed, we make a few quotations from the description which is given of a new form of non striated muscular fibre, discovered by Professor Kolliker.

The smooth muscles, according to this *savant*, are composed of contractile fibre cells. These are more or less spindle-shaped, but according to the precise form they are arranged into three groups, the short, long and narrow. "These cells are composed of soft light yellow substance which swells in water and acetic acid, in which last it becomes of a paler color. There is no appreciable difference between the outer and inner parts, though in acetic acid it would seem as if each fibre cell had a delicate covering. Their substance is homogeneous with longitudinal stripes, and they often contain small pale granules, sometimes yellow globules of fat. Each fibre cell has, without exception, a pale nucleus sometimes only perceptible in acetic acid. Its form is peculiar being like a small staff rounded at each end. The substance of the nucleus is homogeneous The contractile fibre cells lying side by side, or end to end form the smooth muscles as they appear to the naked eye. They may be divided into, 1. Purely smooth muscles containing no other tissue; such as those of the nipple, corium, of the interior of the