

**XIX.**—*Principles of Medicine; comprising General Pathology and Therapeutics, and a brief general view of Etiology, Nosology, Semiology, Diagnosis, Prognosis, and Hygienics.* By CHARLES J. B. WILLIAMS, M.D., F.R.S., &c. Edited, with additions, by Meredith Clymer, M.D., &c. Fourth American edition, revised. Pp. 476. Philadelphia: Blanchard & Lea. Montreal: B. Dawson.

We have always regarded Dr. Williams' *Principles of Medicine* as the best treatise on general pathology that could be placed in the hands of the student of medicine. It contains so much varied and important information, treated in a clear, concise, and practical manner, it cannot fail to be highly instructive to all who study its pages. That it has attained a great popularity in America, is sufficiently evidenced by the fact, that the volume lying before us is the fourth edition; and, so satisfied are we of the soundness, in general, of the principles it contains, we hope the enterprising publishers may soon have to issue a fifth edition.

The author has made new and extensive additions, embodying "most of the facts and established deductions made available to the science and art of medicine during the last few years." Among the new matter, are some remarks on the rationale of cod liver oil in the treatment of cacoplastic and aplastic diseases. An opinion has very generally prevailed, that cod liver oil owes its efficiency entirely to the iodine and bromine which it contains. Bennet, Neligan, Pereira, and others have given this view the sanction of their authority. The French School of Medicine has entertained the same idea; for, no later than last year, the Academy appointed a committee, consisting of MM. Guibourt, Souberain, Gibert, and Ricord, to enquire into the therapeutical properties of a combination of iodine and oil, which M. Murchal had employed from 1848. Formulæ for the iodined oil had been proposed, likewise, by MM. Personne and Deschamps. The report of the committee was favorable. More recently, M. Trousseau has recommended patients to butter their bread with a preparation containing the iodide of potassium.

Dr. Williams "thinks it scarcely necessary even to advert to this supposition, still entertained by a few," but adopts the views of its action held by Dr. Ascherson of Berlin. Dr. A. first discovered that when albumen is brought into contact with fluid fat, it coagulates and forms a thin film enclosing a particle of oil; and he pointed out that, in the process of nutrition, oil globules are essential to the formation of cells. In tuberculosis there exists a mal-nutrition, arising from a deficiency of fat, of which the rudimental molecules of all the textures of the body consist. This deficiency the cod liver oil supplies, and thus sustains nutrition and vitality. Other oils, he believes, would act quite as beneficially. This explanation of the *modus medendi* appears very plausible, but recent