

Book Reviews.

Chemical and Microscopical Diagnosis. BY FRANCIS CARTER WOOD, M.D., Adjunct Professor of Clinical Pathology, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, New York; Pathologist to St Luke's Hospital, New York. With one hundred and eighty-eight illustrations in the text and nine colored plates. Cloth, \$5.00; Half Leather, \$5.50. New York and London: D. Appleton & Company. Toronto: Morang & Company.

The up-to-date practitioner of the present day is distinguished from his predecessor of twenty years ago by the fact that he applies the results of modern researches on the blood, sputum, urine, and other secretions and excretions of the body to the solution of his problems of diagnosis. Just inasmuch as he uses these methods intelligently and carefully is he superior to other practitioners who employ only the older means of physical diagnosis.

It has been shown that a considerable number of cases which were supposed to have typhoid fever, with rapid and progressive anemia, had an entirely different disease, acute lymphatic leukemia, a diagnosis of which can be made only by an examination of the blood. Again, an operation is occasionally performed for the removal of tumors of the abdominal cavity, when, if the blood had been examined, the patient would not have been subjected to the shock and danger of an operation. Such patients may be the subjects of myelogenous leukemia, and an operation under these conditions is unjustifiable. Again, the question of testing for albumin in the urine, is of the greatest importance in connection with the question of life insurance, and also with the problem of early diagnosis of chronic nephritis at a stage at which the disease can be improved by treatment.

So, too, the identification of the different sugars in the urine, upon which special stress has been laid, enables the practitioner to distinguish between true diabetes and the alimentary melliturias, the latter being of importance from a dietary point of view, but not of bad prognostic import.

The study of sputum may enable the practitioner who employs suitable staining methods to diagnose tuberculosis before changes in the lungs sufficient to give rise to physical signs make their appearance, and thus the patient gains six months or a year at a period when climatic treatment is most useful.

The diagnosis of carcinoma of the stomach is often impossible by the ordinary means employed in physical diagnosis. Analysis of the gastric juice, however, frequently enables the surgeon to obtain such strong diagnostic hints of the condition involving the stomach that an operation is warranted. Such