

Reviews.

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A HANDBOOK OF HYGIENE: By George Wilson, A.M., M.D., and C. M., (Edin.), Medical Officer of Health for the Warwick Union of Sanitary Authorities; formerly Medical Officer H. M. Convict Prison, Portsmouth. London: J. & A. Churchill, 1873.

We are indebted to Dawson Bros. for the above book. This is the second edition of the work, and it seems to have met with general favor from the public of England. We have reviewed it very carefully, and we must say that Dr. Wilson has certainly paid great attention to the study of Hygiene.

He has written a book which gives a summary of the *whole* subject. It is well adapted to health officers, and likely to be of considerable use to the general public. It contains a short introductory chapter on "Public Hygiene and Preventable Disease," and then takes up *seriatim* the functions and constituents of food, air, ventilation and warming, water, dwellings, sewage, disinfection, and the duties of health officers; and in an appendix an epitome is given of the various health acts and the powers and obligations contained in them. All gentlemen who are interested in sanitary matters will find a fund of information entirely free from medical technicalities. The author makes one remark among many that we must not omit to bring before the public notice. He says, in speaking of the causes of deterioration and disease in *genus homo*, that "These may be divided into two classes, namely, *Social* and *Material*." By the material he means impure air, impure water, insufficient or unwholesome food, dampness of soil, deficiency of warmth, &c., &c., which he says properly belong to "Legislative enactments. The social causes of deterioration and disease, on the other hand, are little, if at all controlled by State interference." But the greater part must be remedied by constant animadversion through the Press, the Pulpit and the Platform, as well as by general instruction to family circles and schools by the physician, the minister, and journalist, or any other philanthropic persons who will carry due weight with them. Sanitary works can never, by themselves, make a community healthy; they must be aided by social virtue. The whole nation must earnestly strive by continuous efforts at self-improvement to cultivate good personal habits, for, as Dr. Wilson truly says, "public virtue is essential to public health, and both tonational prosperity." Such books as this will, we trust, aid in that general education in sanitary matters which must be the first step towards a satisfactory public health. We should advise all those who are interested in such matters to buy it—if for no other reason but their own household regulation,