

Reviews and Notices of Books.

A Text-Book of Obstetrics. By BARTON COOKE HIRST, M.D., Professor of Obstetrics in the University of Pennsylvania. With 653 illustrations. Pp. 820. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, 1898. Price in cloth, \$5.00. Sheep or half morocco, \$6.00

Prof. Hirst, as he states in his preface, has devoted himself exclusively for the past twelve years to the practice and teaching of obstetrics. His position as an author and teacher warrant the expectation of a work of special merit.

In this book, Prof. Hirst has given the profession a thoroughly excellent *précis* of the subject of obstetrics.

He has considered the subject under the following main headings: I. Pregnancy; II. The Physiology and Management of Labor and the Puerperium; III. The Mechanism of Labor; IV. The Pathology of Labor; V. The Pathology of the Puerperium; VI. Obstetrical Operations; VII. The New-Born Infant.

It is questionable whether it would not have been better to consider the subject of Mechanism, before taking up that of the Management of Labor and the Puerperium.

From the point of view of the student, scarcely sufficient attention has been paid to the explanation of the mechanism of labor.

In the treatment of eclampsia, the author condemns strongly the employment of pilocarpin. He recommends highly the use of veratrum viride, and the hypodermic injection of large quantities of normal saline solution. In plethoric cases he considers bleeding gives very good results. He condemns the *accouchement forcé*, claiming that "the necessary operation for the delivery of the woman distracts one's attention from the treatment of the convulsions, and adds for the time being, a violent source of irritation to the already highly wrought nervous system."

The chapter on Puerperal Sepsis is most masterly, it is probably the best presentation of this subject, take it all round, in English to-day. He condemns the use of the vaginal douche before labor, as it cannot be depended upon. In those cases where it is necessary, the vagina must be scrubbed out as well as douched, as for a surgical operation. He recommends the routine examination of the vaginal discharge before labor.

The author's observations on the employment of antistreptococci serum are worthy of the gravest consideration.

Prof. Hirst has had an unusual experience in the performance of