

Tropical Medicine.

Fevers in the Tropics. By Sir Leonard Rogers. Third edition. Pp. xii+404+9 plates. (Oxford Medical Publications.) (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder and Stoughton, 1919.) Price 30s. net.

THIS, the third edition of Sir Leonard Rogers's well-known work, has, in our opinion, been improved by the pruning process to which it has been subjected, but it may be doubted whether the process has been sufficiently drastic, and personally we should breathe a sigh of relief if the "Burdwan fever" and some other hardy perennials were finally laid to rest. The distinguishing character of the author's method is the great importance which he attaches to the study of temperature charts and to leucocyte counts as means of diagnosis, with the result that, perhaps unwittingly, he scarcely emphasises sufficiently that in diseases of a parasitic nature these can be only of secondary importance. Thus "a great leucopenia" may be "greatly in favour of kala-azar," but a diagnosis can be made with certainty only in one way, viz. by finding the parasites; and as it is not stated whether this has been done in the many examples, accompanied by charts, given of "this disease," we are uncertain whether they really are "this disease," or examples of another disease, possibly the 43 per cent. of "kala-azar" cases in which parasites are *not* found, and which, for all we know to the contrary, may also show "a great leucopenia."

The author's exposition of these indirect methods of diagnosis consumes, we think, too much space, so that pathological histology, which should form our only certain basis for the interpretation of symptoms, receives rather scant attention. Thus nothing is said of the changes in American trypanosomiasis, and those of malaria and blackwater fever, for example, are very incompletely described.

Again, although twenty-one pages are allotted to a discussion of pre-suppurative hepatitis, we ourselves do not know what a liver in this condition would look like, as no post-mortem descriptions are given.

Under blackwater fever it is stated that "the parasite most commonly met with is the malignant tertian, the other forms being rare." If the other forms are rare, as in a malaria district like West Africa, or the Duars in India, this is only what one would expect; consequently, the statement has little significance; but if we are considering a district like the Panama Canal, where the simple tertian parasite forms about 26 per cent. of the malaria cases, then this statement is not true, for

we find that about the same percentage—viz. 24 per cent.—of the blackwater cases show simple tertian parasites, and on the Madera River, Brazil, where simple tertian forms about 30 per cent. of the malaria cases, the percentage for the blackwater cases is 42 per cent.

On p. 66 we find a common error repeated—viz. that tsetse-flies in the resting position can be distinguished from all other flies by the wings "closed . . . like the blades of a pair of scissors"; and on p. 86, probably through a lapse of memory, it is said that tartar emetic is specific for American trypanosomiasis; unfortunately, it appears to have no action on it. Misprints are rather numerous: *Crintridia* for *Crithidia*, *Triomata* for *Triatoma*, *lenticularis* for *lectularius*, *sodia* for *sordida*, *tropical* for *tropica*, *galinarum* for *gallinarum*, etc.

Readers who do not already know the work will find something different from the ordinary text-book, but we think they would be glad if the author's well-known clinical enthusiasm could express itself more tersely and—dare we say it?—more critically.

J. W. W. S.

Practical Chemistry.

- (1) *A Text-book of Quantitative Chemical Analysis.* By Dr. A. C. Cumming and Dr. S. A. Kay. Third edition. Pp. xv+416. (London: Gurney and Jackson; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1919.) Price 12s. 6d. net.
- (2) *A Course of Practical Chemistry for Agricultural Students.* Vol. ii. Part i. By H. A. D. Neville and L. F. Newman. Pp. 122. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1919.) Price 5s. net.
- (3) *Chemical Calculation Tables: For Laboratory Use.* By Prof. H. L. Wells. Second edition, revised. Pp. v+43. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1919.) Price 6s. 6d. net.

THERE is always a tendency among students of analytical chemistry to value their work by its quantity and the nearness of their results to what is assumed to be correct, and in this they are often encouraged by those who have the direction of their studies. They do as they are told in their text-book—weigh out so much, dissolve in 200 c.c. of water, add 20 c.c. of a stock reagent, heat to boiling, wash three times by decantation, and so on; and in the end, though they get an excellent result, they have learned not so much chemistry as if they had made an apple dumpling by intelligently following the instructions of a cookery book.