

conceptual shorthand as physics and chemistry, nor does he deny it. He is content to indicate the great achievements already to the credit of this powerful shorthand, and to leave his readers in a mood of optimistic agnosticism as to the future. If ever there comes a limit to the extent to which physico-chemical interpretations of life can be pushed, that limit will surely be very much nearer to the ultimate goal of biology than anything that has yet been reached. Such is the impression derived from reading Höber's book; such, indeed, is the policy which directs and stimulates the majority of modern physiological research.

F. J. W. R.

Rheumatism and Gout.

Aspects of Rheumatism and Gout: their Pathogeny, Prevention and Control. By Llewellyn Jones Llewellyn. Pp. xiii + 295. (London: William Heinemann (Medical Books), Ltd., 1927.) 10s. net.

IN "Aspects of Rheumatism and Gout," Dr. Llewellyn, who has written much on these spa diseases, has collected the material of a number of his addresses and essays, many of them previously published, dealing with their pathogeny, prevention, and control, into an eminently readable and suggestive whole. In the foreword the plan of the work is outlined, and this is followed by a disquisition on diathesis, a subject which Sir Archibald Garrod has, since this volume appeared, treated in the Huxley lecture at Charing Cross Hospital; the rise, eclipse, and revival of the diathetic conception are sketched, and diathesis is regarded as a synonym for chemical individuality.

The diathesis of acute rheumatism or rheumatic fever is characterised by an inborn tendency to a want of the normal endocrine-autonomic balance which is manifested by instability of the functions of the skin and is essentially an inherent deficiency in the power of organic regulation. Similarly, in rheumatoid or atrophic arthritis, in osteo-arthritis and gout, the author finds evidence of this endocrine-autonomic imbalance, and further concludes that infections, if and when responsible for arthritis, act not directly but indirectly—the intermediary mechanism being instability or defect of the neuro-endocrine system. As bearing on this view, the geographical correspondence in the incidence of goitre and of acute rheumatism and cardiac disease, which is so prominent in Bristol, is brought out. Later on, the resemblance of acute rheumatism to serum sickness, or the symptoms following injec-

tion of horse serum, is pointed out, and the view that infection causes the instability of the neuro-endocrine system, which is the exciting cause of the joint symptoms, is again suggested. In considering the prevention of acute rheumatism and heart disease, the importance of supervision in the pre-rheumatic phase is emphasised.

The relation of oral sepsis and arthritis, which has been so much in the limelight, is dealt with in considerable detail, and gout, on which the author wrote a book some seven years ago (1920), is described as a hereditary condition of hypersensitiveness to proteins and analogous to asthma, the remarkable food idiosyncrasies of the gouty being brought forward to enforce the argument. It would thus appear that the gout-producing factor in alcoholic liquors is not the alcohol, but some protein such as hordein in beer and yeast cells in wine. A chapter is devoted to the common ailment lumbago, or pain in the back, and the difficulties in diagnosis are dealt with in chapters on the pitfalls in connexion with sciatica and arthritis. In conclusion, it should be said that the author's method of presenting his subject matter and style of writing add an attraction to the interest of these common diseases.

Our Bookshelves.

Colloids: a Textbook. By Prof. H. R. Kruyt. Translated from the Manuscript by Prof. H. S. van Klooster. Pp. xi + 262. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1927.) 17s. 6d. net.

THE author says in his preface that his purpose has been to write a text-book or, in other words, "to offer a main line of orientation to students who wish to become acquainted with the general trend of Colloid Chemistry or who desire to undertake research in this particular branch of Chemistry." The work may certainly be said to accomplish this purpose and to have solved the fundamental problem of text-book writing—that of selection from an enormous mass of material—with complete success.

A general introduction begins with a brief description of colloidal systems, gives in less than forty pages a clear and concise account of boundary phenomena, and concludes with a description of the electrical conditions at interfaces. The second part, the largest of the book, is devoted to suspensoid sols; a number of important generalisations from the vast mass of data on charge, flocculation, etc., are developed very clearly. The third part, dealing with emulsoid sols, departs more markedly than the rest of the work from traditional lines. The author takes as a type of this class the agar sol, which is certainly to be preferred to gelatin, and shows that its stability is a function of two factors, hydration