

*Lectures on Dielectric Theory and Insulation.* By Dr. J. B. Whitehead. Pp. vii + 154. (London: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Ltd.; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1927.) 12s. 6d. net.

PROF. J. B. WHITEHEAD, who is professor of electrical engineering at the Johns Hopkins University, has done much valuable research on insulating materials. During 1926-27, when he was an exchange professor in France, he gave a series of lectures on the properties of dielectrics and the phenomena which occur when high electric stress is applied to insulating materials. These lectures he now publishes in book form, and they will be very helpful to physicists and particularly to electrical engineers.

In the first lecture, Prof. Whitehead gives a brief and accurate account of the more important postulates which have been made in the classical theory of perfect dielectrics. Most of the material in the following seven lectures is taken from recent papers on physics and electrical engineering. The results, however, have been co-ordinated and they are presented in a way which will be appreciated by those engaged in research. The author points out the most promising directions for further research. The last chapter is devoted to researches on the properties of composite insulating materials when subjected to very high electric stresses. In this chapter he incorporates many of his own researches on these materials when subjected to high alternating stresses. In conclusion, a very complete bibliography of the subject has been given. It is arranged under six general headings, and we have found it useful.

*Bacterial Vaccines and their Position in Therapeutics.* By Prof. Leonard S. Dudgeon. (Modern Medical Monographs, edited by Prof. Hugh Maclean.) Pp. vii + 87. (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1927.) 7s. 6d. net.

THIS book is essentially a record of the personal opinions of the author after an extensive experience of twenty years on the preparation and use of prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines in different diseases. Rabies and vaccinia are included, although not strictly bacterial, but prophylaxis by means of diphtheria toxin, and Dick's scarlatina toxin, are omitted. Very few diseases are included for which the author has not himself used vaccines. Much sound and valuable advice is given about the kind of case in which vaccines should be avoided or only given with great caution. For the rest, the advice, if rather conventional and based on almost purely empirical clinical grounds, is backed by experience and free from the uncritical and dangerous optimism of many treatises on the subject. Prof. Dudgeon is adverse to the treatment of acute general infections by vaccines. The more recent advances in the theory of prophylactic vaccines and bacterial antigens are unnoticed, and in this the author consistently adheres to his policy of dealing only with what he himself has tried for a long period. No reasons are given in support of the use of therapeutic vaccines beyond the author's personal

belief in their efficacy, and no new experimental evidence is adduced.

*Hippokrates: eine Auslese seiner Gedanken über den gesunden und kranken Menschen und über die Heilkunst.* Sinngemäß verdeutscht und gemeinverständlich erläutert von Dr. Arnold Sack. Pp. vi + 87. (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1927.) 3-60 gold marks.

IN this booklet, Dr. Arnold Sack, of Heidelberg, has made a judicious selection of the most important passages in the works of Hippocrates and rendered them into readable German. The passages selected include the oath, and extracts among others from the law, the surgery, the epidemics, airs, waters, and places, the prognostics, dentition of infants, nature of man, care of health, and numerous aphorisms.

In the postscript, Dr. Sack maintains that though nothing definite is known about the life of Hippocrates, it is certain that he was not a mythical personage, but really did exist, as is shown by allusions to him in Plato's dialogues, and not only practised medicine but also wrote medical works. It was not until many centuries after his time that commentators of the Hippocratic works appeared in Alexandria, Athens, and Rome, the most prominent of whom were Galen and Herophilus. No critic has yet been able to determine with certainty which of these works was written by Hippocrates himself and which by his pupils. It is, therefore, not surprising that some of the passages selected by Dr. Sack are from works regarded by other commentators as spurious.

*Finlayson's Clinical Manual for the Study of Medical Cases.* The fourth edition. Edited by Dr. Carl H. Browning, Dr. E. P. Cathcart, and Dr. Leonard Finlay; revised and augmented throughout by various contributors. Pp. xvi + 815 + 4 plates. (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1926.) 18s. net.

MANY physicians and students will greet with pleasure the publication, after an interval of thirty-five years, of a new edition of "Finlayson's Clinical Manual." The great progress made in all branches of medicine, and particularly in diagnostic methods, has necessitated the complete revision of some parts of the book and the inclusion of much that is entirely new, but the general plan of the original has been retained, and there has been no departure from the principles of medical training indicated by the late Dr. Finlayson. The student is still taught the prime importance of observation at the bedside, first and mainly with his eyes, next with the hands, and last and least with the ears. Laboratory methods, however, are not neglected. The technique of reactions which come only within the sphere of the bio-chemist is naturally omitted, but full details are given concerning investigations of general value, including recently evolved tests such as that of van den Bergh. The manual contains useful tables and a very complete index, and there is no doubt that this edition will be as popular as were its predecessors.