

physiotherapy. Dr. J. Eastman Sheehan's account of the present position of plastic surgery is very generously illustrated by 16 figures, and shows that, though the war gave opportunities for improvement in the technique, there is much need for plastic surgery in civil life, especially for the relief of the after-results of burns. The practical aspects of the cancer problem are handled by Dr. W. S. Bainbridge, and Dr. F. Carter Wood describes the uses and limitations of radiation in malignant disease. Other lectures deal with the newer remedies, the colon, the doctor in court, fits, gaits, puerperal infection, the toxæmias of pregnancy, the colds of children, and periodical health examination. This list does not nearly exhaust the catholic nature of the lectures in this well brought out volume.

### STERILITY IN WOMEN.

DR. CATTIER, to whom was awarded a few years ago the Michelin prize on the depopulation problem for an essay entitled "Des Bébés, s'il vous plaît," has now written a book on female sterility with the subtitle "maternity restored."<sup>1</sup> The very fact that it is written by a medical representative of the group in France that is trying to combat the effects of birth restriction in that country gives the book a character of its own, and it must be regarded as a medical treatise on sterility and as advocating the views of a particular sociological school.

The investigation and treatment of sterility in women is considered fully both from the preventive and curative standpoint, and with the enthusiasm of one who regards his subject as of the utmost importance for the welfare and betterment of the race. Recent methods, such as those of Rubin and his followers, for investigating the patency of the Fallopian tubes by insufflation or the injection of opaque solutions, are included, as well as details of treatment by general hygienic measures, organotherapy, massage, exercises, hydrotherapy, pessaries, artificial insemination, and various surgical procedures. Considerable space is properly devoted to the treatment of local inflammatory conditions of the lower straits of the genital tract in order to lessen the incidence of the chronic uterine, tubal, and peritoneal conditions that interfere with the reproductive function. There is little critical discussion of the relative value of the various procedures and forms of treatment advocated, and it is not easy to discover how much is to be expected in the way of results or how to make a selection from among so many. There is a concluding chapter on the amelioration of the race, the modern marriage, eugenic selection and prenuptial examination, for the last of which the author shows no enthusiasm.

The book is typically French in style, with many curious asides and digressions that lighten and enliven what would otherwise be heavy medical reading. It will have a particular interest for those who wish to study the question of depopulation, or to learn the views of a medical practitioner who is among those who have seen reason to take alarm at the effect of the restriction of families in a country that has practised it widely and for long.

### FACT AND FANCY.

THERE are some who deny that the world is round, and some who still believe in the mystery of Joanna Southcott's boxes, so that it is not altogether a matter of surprise that there are others who deny the facts of physiology and of experience. There is a book before us written by one W. H. BATES, M.D., which for boldness of denial and strangeness of assertion rivals the others. The title of the book is *The Cure of Imperfect Sight by Treatment without Glasses*,<sup>2</sup> but that on the cover is "Perfect sight without glasses." The author would have us throw away our useful glasses, and beguile ourselves into the belief that we see better without them. Trial shows that we do not, and that his alleged treatment is no more than a beguilement that

does not stand the test of experience. To practise judgement of what is seen is one thing, to see that same thing better is another; to "palm" the eyes—otherwise make use of familiar and refreshing massage—is one thing, to alter an anatomical defect another. But then this author denies anatomical facts, and alleges that all errors of refraction are merely functional. Strangely enough, he admits the use of glasses for patients who have no lenses as the result of cataract operation, but denies the use of the lens in accommodation, despite the evidence of Purkinje's figures, which he has heard of, for he reproduces the classical picture in his pages. His cult extends to the assertion of the value of small print, even that which is so small that it cannot be read; "those who cannot read such type may be benefited simply by looking at it." Excessive light, he alleges, is not injurious, but actually beneficial; therefore look open-eyed at the sun. Reading in bed is "beneficial rather than injurious," perhaps when the print is not seen! But, strangely, black has its virtues: "It is possible to perform surgical operation without anaesthetics when the patient is able to remember black perfectly." Perhaps the author got somewhere near a truth in a sentence in the last paragraph of this book: "The fact is that, except in rare cases, man is not a reasoning being."

We met one of this cult recently; a parent had been summoned to attend a certain place owing to his persistent refusal to provide his child with glasses for school use. The child had myopia of 3 D; without glasses vision was 1/60, with glasses 5/6. The child appreciated the value of the glasses, but the father would not allow them to be worn, alleging other treatment. But the recalcitrant parent wore glasses himself for an equal degree of myopia. It seems a pity good paper should be wasted on such a book, or that our columns should give space to its notice. But there have been inquiries, and so this review.

### NOTES ON BOOKS.

THIS is the season of mellow fruitfulness in the publishing world, when new books and new editions fall thick and fast upon us. Among the imported fruits of learning and industry we welcome a further edition, the fourteenth, of the *American Illustrated Medical Dictionary*,<sup>3</sup> known to many in this country as the "Big Dorland," to distinguish it from its diminutive elder brother, the "Little" or "Pocket Dorland." The present issue has been thoroughly revised by Dr. NEWMAN DORLAND in collaboration with Dr. E. C. L. MILLER, professor of bacteriology and biochemistry in the Medical College of Virginia. It is stated in the preface that there are over 2,000 new terms in this edition, and many definitions have been rewritten to bring the terminology in accord with the latest accepted ideas. The spelling, of course, follows American usage. Many new line blocks have been added in order to elucidate definitions and emphasize points that can be well shown in this way. Since it first appeared twenty-seven years ago the work has grown continuously. The fourteenth edition contains nearly twice as many pages as the first, but, owing to the use of thin but opaque paper, the thickness of the volume has not increased in proportion. The English-speaking medical profession owes a large debt to Dr. Dorland for the high standard of care and accuracy maintained through successive revisions.

The second edition of Dr. ALEXANDER's textbook on diseases of the ear in childhood<sup>4</sup> is really a complete work on otology, with special reference to the anatomical and pathological peculiarities presented in the young. The first edition appeared some fifteen years ago. The frequency with which the ear is attacked by disease in childhood may be the justification for this rather artificial restriction. But, as we have indicated, the book is far more comprehensive than its title, the only important omission to be discovered being the absence of any reference to tumours and other diseases of the eighth nerve. There is no call for criticism, for the work, which is dedicated to the memory of Adam Politzer, is written by one of the great masters of otology, is of a reasonable size, and is adorned with many fine illustrations.

<sup>1</sup> *The American Illustrated Medical Dictionary*. By W. A. Newman Dorland, A.M., M.D., F.A.C.S. With the collaboration of E. C. L. Miller, M.D. Fourteenth edition, revised and enlarged. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1927. (Med. 8vo, pp. 1288; illustrated, 35s. net; with thumb index 37s. 6d. net.)

<sup>2</sup> *Die Ohrenkrankheiten im Kindesalter*. Von Dr. Gustav Alexander. 2., umgearbeitete Auflage. Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1927. (Imp. 8vo, pp. xii + 399; 106 figures, 9 plates. M. 39.)

<sup>3</sup> *La Stérilité Féminine: Les Maternités Récupérées*. Par Dr. Cattier. Éditions Médicales. Paris: N. Maloine, 1927. (5½ x 7½, pp. 254; 13 figures, 15 fr.)

<sup>4</sup> *The Cure of Imperfect Sight by Treatment without Glasses*. By W. H. Bates, M.D. London: A. F. Bird, 1927. (5½ x 8, pp. xx + 314; 65 figures, 15s. net.)