

The author's style is entertaining, often witty, and, in his own words, "the intelligent householder who has no time, probably no inclination, for systematic studies, may read herein as he runs, and find hints that will save himself and his loved ones from unspeakable pain and sorrow."

In view of recent results of investigation concerning the comparative value of disinfectants, the author's statement as to the use of vinegar for such purposes, and also as to the value of 'little pinches of sulphur' burned every hour throughout a house in which are patients ill with infectious disease, is misleading. Such a procedure would only prove noxious to the inmates, without accomplishing even the slightest good. It would be far better to wait until convalescence is established, and then vacate the apartments, and proceed with thorough disinfection.

In the words of one of the best authorities on the subject, "There can be no partial disinfection of infectious material. Its infecting power is either destroyed or it is not." The same authority, Dr. Sternberg, also recommends the employment of three pounds of sulphur to every thousand cubic feet of air space, as requisite for thorough disinfection.

The chapters on small-pox, cholera, and other infectious diseases, are valuable, and set forth clearly, and in a salient manner, the importance of preventive measures.

REMSEN'S ORGANIC CHEMISTRY.

In the preparation of this work, Professor Remsen has performed valuable service for the advancement of chemical science in this country, since it will place within the reach of those who are deprived of access to the best sources of information a systematic exposition of the principles of modern organic chemistry. There has long been felt the need of a text-book in English on organic chemistry that would present in a concise form its fundamental principles according to the most recent knowledge of the subject, without entering so far upon details as to render the book too comprehensive for ordinary use. To those who are familiar with the voluminous literature of this subject, the difficulties to be encountered in the preparation of such a text-book are apparent, and they will doubtless appreciate the judicious se-

lection of material and its systematic arrangement in this volume. The thoroughness with which structural relations of organic compounds are treated will be very serviceable to the student, especially the constitution of the aromatic hydrocarbons, including naphthalene and anthracene, and the methods employed in demonstrating the structure of their derivatives.

Certain peculiarities in the nomenclature adopted, and in the form of some of the structural symbols, will probably not find acceptance with all chemists. Yet, concerning the nomenclature of organic chemistry in general, it cannot be denied that usage is far from uniform, and there is even greater confusion in the terms employed than with inorganic compounds. Chemists do not seem inclined to accept fully the rules proposed by the late Dr. Watts, although it must be admitted in their favor that they possess at least the advantages of a system. In the structural symbols of the unsaturated compounds, including the aromatic series, it is difficult to see what is gained by departing from the usual custom of representing fully the valence of the carbon atoms by bonds. There would be little danger of misconception as regards their true significance after the careful explanations given on pp. 213, 225, and 239; and unquestionably a student gains clearer ideas of the chemical changes in passing from one homologous series to another, by writing the structure formulae in full, with the valence of the atoms concerned.

Numerous errors are noticed, few of which, however, interfere with the scientific accuracy of the work. The assertion that citric acid has not been made artificially is hardly in accordance with fact; and it is not strictly accurate to state, that, in the manufacture of acetic acid from wood, the crude distillate is neutralized with soda-ash, since, in this country at least, the acid is usually converted into the calcium salt. In the artificial preparation of alizarine, it is generally understood that this dye-stuff can be made only from anthrachinone-sulphonic acid, anthrachinone-disulphonic acid giving isopurpurine or allied products.

Another important feature of this work is the introduction of occasional experiments designed to familiarize the student with compounds described in the text. This plan could doubtless be extended to excellent advantage; and there would probably be a large demand for another volume of equal size, devoted exclusively to laboratory appointments, manipulation, and experimental work in organic chemistry.

An introduction to the study of the compounds of carbon; or, Organic chemistry. By IRA REMSEN. Boston, Ginn, Heath, & Co., 1885. 10+364 p., illustr. 8°.