

HEALTH MATTERS.

Evergreens and Consumption.

AT a meeting of the American Climatological Association, held in Baltimore, Dr. Loomis of New York read a paper on evergreen-forests as a therapeutic agent in pulmonary phthisis, in which he said that it had long been known that similar climates, as determined by geographical and meteorological conditions, have different therapeutic effects. It is becoming more apparent that there is some relation between the development of organisms and atmospheric conditions. Cold and high altitudes render the air aseptic; but the degree of cold and the height required are so great, that clinically it is not possible to derive much benefit from this fact. The effect of a purely aseptic air upon ulcerative processes is not so great as the effect of an atmosphere which is aseptic on account of the presence of antiseptic agents. The belief in the good effects of pine-forests in cases of phthisis is quite unanimous, and the clinical evidence in favor of their beneficial influence is unquestioned. The atmosphere in such regions is not only aseptic, but also antiseptic. Such an atmosphere contains considerable turpentine-vapor, and we should therefore expect it to contain a certain amount of peroxide of hydrogen. The majority of cases of phthisis die, not directly from the lesions in the lung, but from the secondary septicæmia and pyæmia which are set up. It is impossible to apply to the ulcerations within the lung the antiseptic washing and dressing that is employed in external lesions; but, if an antiseptic atmosphere can be obtained, we may hope to counteract the secondary poisoning. Such an atmosphere will not destroy the bacilli, but it will accomplish much in the way of arresting the suppurative process. The atmosphere in the region of evergreen-forests acts in a manner similar to the antiseptic agents which are successfully used to arrest suppurative processes in other portions of the body; and, in all probability, the active agent is peroxide of hydrogen resulting from the oxidation of the turpentine-vapor. While it is not possible for every one suffering with pulmonary phthisis to go to an antiseptic atmosphere, yet it is possible to render the air of any particular locality antiseptic. In the course of the discussion of Professor Loomis's paper, Dr. Cohen reported excellent results in the way of alleviating the symptoms of phthisis by the inhalation of terebinthinate substances, especially when associated with the peroxide of hydrogen, or oxygen.

BOOK-REVIEWS.

The Republic of the Future; or, Socialism a Reality. By ANNA BOWMAN DODD. New York, Cassell & Co. 24°.

THIS is not a pretentious book, but a pleasantly written series of letters "from a Swedish nobleman living in the twenty-first century to a friend in Christiana." It appears from the letters that the American Republic has been dynamited, and upon its ruins a socialistic republic established. The year of the revolution is 1900, and, by placing the date of the letters late in the twenty-first century, the author assumes sufficient time to have elapsed to fully develop the characteristic society. The Swedish nobleman, recognizing the evils of society based upon the principle of competition, and learning that the Americans (that is to say, the Germans and Irish, who have exterminated the English stock) have succeeded in forming a socialistic society, pays a visit to this strange people for the purpose of studying their institutions. His letters are descriptive both of what he saw and of what he thought.

Such is the plot of the book, and it certainly is an attractive one; but, to be useful as an argument, the ideas from which it starts must properly represent the socialists, whom it undertakes to criticise. This, however, it fails to do. The author is either ignorant of the writings of the best socialists, or has deliberately chosen the views of inferior men in order the more easily to ridicule them.

It is right that such a charge as this should be sustained by specific statements, and we will call attention to three points in which these letters fail to appreciate or to understand the theory of socialism.

First, It is assumed that socialism demands absolute equality of

condition: for example, only homely women are permitted to become educated, lest the equality of attractiveness should be destroyed; and much more of the same sort. This is foreign to the spirit of socialism. "It is not equality of condition, but equality of opportunity, that is demanded. The rule of distribution is that each shall share in the good things of life according to his efficiency as a producer. It is communism which says, "To every man according to his needs:" socialism says, "To every man according to his ability."

Second, It is assumed that government directs methods of expenditure as well as methods of production. In this Republic the houses are built according to law. Dress, too, is prescribed. But all this is a mistaken notion. It is not found in the writings of representative socialists. Indeed, the opposite is expressed. A sharp line is drawn between wealth used as capital, and wealth used for giving enjoyment to the consumer; and there is no suggestion that law should prescribe how this second class of wealth may be used.

Third, The author of these letters says that 'Progress and Poverty' is the Bible of the new republic. It is read from the rostrum of the temple erected to ethical culture, — a temple, we are told, which stands without a steeple. Now, it seems hardly possible that our author could have read 'Progress and Poverty' with care, or the many contradictions which exist between the views of Mr. George and those realized in the socialistic society described, would have been recognized. For example, socialism charges upon commercial competition all the evils of modern society: it is therefore quite right to say, as our author says, that in a socialistic society competition in business-matters finds no place. But Mr. George does not desire to exclude competitive action: indeed, he is a firm believer in the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. He is a freetrader. He says, make one simple change in the system of taxation, and the natural laws of trade will insure justice. No socialist would recognize him as more than a temporary leader. He does not go far enough. He proposes only to nationalize land: the socialist would nationalize both capital and land.

This review has taken the book reviewed to be a serious argument against socialism. As such it is worthless, because it does not properly apprehend what socialism means. The reviewer does not call attention to this because he is a believer in the programme of social reform set down by Blanc and Lasalle, but because he feels that every witticism made at the expense of truth assists the cause which the writer of this book undertakes to oppose. It may be that this point of view is incorrect. Possibly the book was intended to be merely a bit of facetious writing. As such it is a success. It is bright, in good style, and full of pleasing imagination; but for an argument it is too full of imagination.

HENRY C. ADAMS.

The Electric Transmission of Energy. By GIBBERT KAPP, C.E. New York, Van Nostrand. 12°.

THIS book forms one of the 'Specialists' Series,' which is a series of handbooks for students and practical engineers. It begins with the customary *résumé* of the elements of electrodynamics, together with a brief study of the nomenclature of the science, and the units used in electrical measurements. While this part of the work is, on the whole, well done, it is evidently the product of the so-called 'practical' mind, rather than that of the educated or well-informed electrician.

A few curious statements occur, which illustrate the difficulty with which makers of handbooks contend in attempting to absorb, or at least to represent, purely scientific conceptions. As an instance the following may be quoted: "The potential of a body is its property of allowing energy stored up in it to become potent, that is, to do work." An investigation of the ideal motor and the ideal system of transmission is followed by an examination of the various types of armatures and the principles which govern their action. The field-magnet is then taken up, its many forms illustrated, and some attention is paid to magnetic resistance, self-induction, etc., use being made of 'characteristic curves' in the development of the principles involved. The subject of the efficiency of the motor is treated at some length, and various systems of transmission are described, including some of the applications of electricity to railway locomotives.