

CHOLERA TREATMENT.—Dr. Yvert, who claims to have had a large experience in the treatment of Asiatic cholera, reports that by the use of bichloride of mercury he has been able to reduce the mortality from 66 to 20 per cent. He also says, that, used as a prophylactic in those who have recently arrived in a region infected with cholera, it has in every instance warded off the disease.

YELLOW-FEVER IN FLORIDA.—From the best information we have been able to obtain, the reported case of yellow-fever at Sanford, Fla., was a true case. The patient, a Mrs. Dumont, wife of a boarding-house keeper, died April 20.

INSOMNIA.—Insomnia is an affection which is trying to both physician and patient alike, and many are the remedies which have been recommended for its cure. The latest of these is the peanut, eaten *ad libitum* just before retiring. A member of the clergy reports success with the peanut after having tried other means without result.

TOBACCO-SMOKING.—We have recently given the views of different physicians as to the effects of tobacco-smoking upon health, and have also referred to experiments bearing upon the question of the antiseptic power of tobacco-fumes. Additional evidence on these points is constantly accumulating. Dr. Hajek of Vienna has declared that smokers are less liable to diphtheria than non-smokers in the ratio of 1 to 2.8; and Dr. Schiff says that smoking is forbidden in the bacteriological laboratories, because it is known to hinder the development of bacteria in the various culture-media.

ACTION OF ELECTRIC LIGHT ON THE EYES.—A new disease, called photo-electric ophthalmia, is described as due to the continual action of the electric light on the eyes. The patient is awakened in the night by severe pain around the eye, accompanied with excessive secretion of tears. An oculist of Cronstadt is said to have had thirty patients thus affected under his care in the last ten years.

BOOK-REVIEWS.

Physiological Notes on Primary Education and the Study of Language. By MARY PUTNAM JACOBI, M.D. New York and London, Putnam. 12°. \$1.

"If literature were the business of life, or if, as was at one time supposed, education meant nothing else but acquaintance with literature, there would be some logic in the extraordinary prominence habitually assigned in education to the study of modes of expression. But from the modern standpoint, that education means such an unfolding of the faculties as shall put the mind into the widest and most effective relation with the entire world of things, spiritual and material, there is an exquisite absurdity in the time-honored method." Such is the opinion of the author; and such, we are glad to say, is the growing opinion of all observant men and women, except, perhaps, those whose observation is limited by the walls of their classrooms, and who do not discern the signs of the times. Dr. Jacobi gives us, in this book of but one hundred and twenty pages, the account of a most interesting personal experiment in primary education, in which a child was taught algebraic signs as a means of concisely expressing certain relations, long before any attempt was made to learn how to write. It would be interesting, did space permit, to follow in detail this experiment. By the time the child was four and a half years old, she had learned the following elements: straight, curved, slanting, and half-slanting lines; also to distinguish perpendicular and horizontal lines, and to draw either straight or curved lines parallel to each other. She was well acquainted with all forms of the triangle, the rectangle, square, trapezium, trapezoid, pentagon, hexagon, circle, and cube. When five years, the child was taught the equality of any two subjects which were demonstrably equal to the same third. And so the child went on to arithmetic, the meaning of words, and botany, before she was six years old.

The author discusses quite fully the place for the study of language in a curriculum of education. On this subject Dr. Jacobi says that it is necessary to maintain a just proportion between the

study of languages and the other studies of a general curriculum. The effect on mental development and training is to be obtained, if at all, by the age of fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen. By this time the pupil requires the broader and more robust discipline of other knowledge, pursued with the thoroughness of scientific method which will then be practicable. It is undesirable to continue the systematic study of languages at this time (they should be dropped altogether); although the habit of reading in all may be most profitably kept up, and other subjects, especially history, studied through their medium. We must confess a great deal of surprise at some of the results which Dr. Jacobi reached in her experiment with the child already referred to. Had this child's accomplishments been reported to us in ordinary conversation, we should have regarded her as a phenomenon. But it is evident that her teacher believes that what was done with her could be done with the average child; and we have too much confidence in Dr. Jacobi to deny it without due consideration, yet would like to see the experiment carried out on a large scale before deciding that the plan was a feasible one. Having given no little attention to the study of languages, and knowing some of their difficulties, we are astonished to find the author stating that "one great reason for teaching children a reading acquaintance with four or five languages between the ages of eight and fourteen, is, that by the latter age they may really know these languages, and then begin to study something else, or of more immediate practical utility," as if a child could at the age of fourteen have a reading acquaintance with four or five languages, and really know them. We should be glad to learn that the opportunity had been given Dr. Jacobi to carry out her plan on a sufficiently extended scale to determine its practicability, for the results which she claims are certainly much to be desired.

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS.

GINN & Co. have just issued "A Vocabulary to the First Six Books of Homer's Iliad," by Professor Thomas D. Seymour of Yale College. It is claimed that a concise special vocabulary to the Homeric poems, or to parts of them, is open to far fewer objections than a similar vocabulary to any other work of Greek literature, since the words are found more nearly in their original significations and constructions. This vocabulary has not been compiled from other dictionaries, but has been made from the poem itself. The maker has endeavored to be concise,—to give nothing but what is important for the accurate and appreciative reading of the Iliad,—and yet to show the original and derived meanings of the words, and to suggest translations which should be both simple and dignified. A confident hope is felt that the concise form of this vocabulary will save much time for the beginner in Homer. More than twenty woodcuts, most of which are new in this country, illustrate the antiquities of the Iliad.

—*The Index of Current Events* (Montreal) was originally intended as a weekly for the use of editors only, and the amount of the annual subscription was decided upon with due regard to the comparatively limited possibilities in the way of circulation among the class it was intended to serve. It has since been suggested that an index of this character might have a much wider utility, and that in particular all those whose calling it is in any way to educate and mould public opinion would find such a publication of considerable service. *The Index of Current Events* is therefore offered at one dollar per annum, post free.

—T. Y. Crowell & Co. will publish soon George Brandes' "Impressions of Russia," in which are included chapters on Russian literature, which has been translated by Samuel C. Eastman of Concord, N.H., who spent last summer in Denmark, and worked under Brandes' supervision.

—Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. have nearly ready a collection of poems by Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, the eminent Philadelphia physician, entitled "The Cup of Youth," which will be published in shape similar to his former volume, "A New Year's Masque;" and a volume by Mrs. A. J. Woodman, a niece of the poet Whittier, entitled "Picturesque Alaska," giving an amusing account of experiences on a trip to Alaska, illustrated with photographs of the most