

Botanic Drugs: Their Materia Medica, Pharmacology and Therapeutics. By Thomas S. Blair, M.D., Author of "Public Hygiene," "A Practitioner's Handbook of Materia Medica and Therapeutics," etc. Large type fully indexed, 394 pages. Price, \$2.00. Cincinnati: Therapeutic Digest Pub. Co., 1917.

Pharmacists need not be told of an increasing scarcity of imported medicinal products; experience has conveyed the information and also awakened the thought that native supplies should be utilized to a larger extent. The plea made by some, that preparations of the galenicals should be more freely prescribed is worthy of repetition; one of the most forceful advocates of return to drugs is Professor A. Tschirch, whose forceful contributions on this subject found place in the pharmaceutical press several years ago. It may be true that drug plant growing has not made the progress hoped for, but there has been development, indicated not only by the experiment farms of pharmaceutical manufacturers but by the smaller gardens in connection with pharmacy

schools. The study of plant drugs by pharmacists is essential to a larger use of galenicals and the book under discussion presents useful information prepared by a trained pharmacologist and active practitioner, who is familiar with drug activities. In connection with the description of the plants, the therapeutic action of these drugs is given and also the dosage in which they are to be prescribed. The pharmacist will find the book useful and not burdened with a large amount of unimportant or obsolete information; recent investigations on the subject are presented instead, and the drugs of lesser importance only briefly discussed or indexed.

Potter. Compend of Materia Medica, Therapeutics and Prescription Writing. Eighth Edition. Revised in accordance with the U. S. P. IX, by A. D. Bush, B.S., M.D., Professor of Physiology and Pharmacology, University of Southern California. Price, \$1.25. P. Blakiston's Son & Co., Philadelphia.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

The vitality and tenacity of life in habit, custom and systems is nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in the retention by the British Empire and United States of the cumbersome and unbusinesslike system of weights and measures based on the arbitrary pound, yard and gallon.

Optimists during half a century have clearly visualized the adoption "in the near future" of a "sane system" based on the decimal unit and its universal operation, and to-day's optimist is still privileged with the experience of the alluring vision. Fortunately the materializing of the vision is brought squarely within the terrain of present operations by the world war and the inevitable post-bellum readjustment.

The firmly entrenched position of the present system was impressed on us by an article in the *JOURNAL* of July, 1868, nearly fifty years ago, under the bewhiskered title of "Weights and Measures." A sentence in this article we reproduce:

"The confusion arising from different standards of weights and measures having the same name could be remedied by the adoption of a decimal system, in the same way as we got rid of the old nuisance of pounds, shillings and pence by using dollars and cents in our money matters."—*Canadian Pharmaceutical Journal*.