PART SECOND.

Bibliographical Record.

ART. I.—*A History of Infusoria: including the Desmidiaceæ and Diatomaceæ, British and Foreign.* By ANDREW PRITCHARD. Fourth Edition, enlarged and revised by J. T. ARLIDGE, M.B., B.A. Lond.; W. ARCHER, Esq.; J. RALFS, M.R.C.S.E.; and W. C. WILLIAMSON, Esq., F.R.S. Illustrated by Forty Plates.—London, 1861. pp. 968.

THIS large work, just published, might well be called a cyclopædia of microscopic organisms, animal and vegetable, so numerous and so varied are the groups of created objects comprised in the ill-defined aggregation of living beings here called "Infusoria." Scientifically, in fact, the term "Infusoria" is so loose and varied in its meaning, that it ought to be rejected. For instance, in the work before us, it is made to comprehend truly vegetable forms, such as the Desmidiaceæ, a congeries of doubtful organisms, here styled Phytozoa; all the lowest phases of animal life, represented by the Protozoa; and, along with these heterogeneous beings, the class of the Rotatoria, which in organization rank alongside the Crustacea. On the contrary, as Dr. Arlidge remarks (p. 199) in his elaborate 'General History of Infusoria,' several authors have used the term in so restricted a sense as to comprehend only the ciliated division of Protozoa.

But before we can reject any term from science, we must be able to replace it by another, or others, more appropriate, and many terms are to be tolerated as provisional. Among those of this class, that of "Infusoria" may be admitted, for the present; or, at least, it may be tolerated in the instance of the work before us, as affording a short and simple title to a collection of essays on the general organization, physiology, and systematic distribution of most of the varieties of organized beings which come within the compass of microscopical investigation.

The publication of so extensive a treatise is a proof how widely microscopic studies are now pursued; and at the same time it will afford an impetus to those studies, since it places in the hands of microscopists a compendium of the present state of knowledge on so large a number of their favourite objects, and one, we must say, without its like in any other language. It professes to be a "fourth edition," but, on comparing it with the previous editions, brought out

under Mr. Pritchard's management, we find it so completely revised, re-arranged, and re-written, that it is *bond fide* a new work. It is sub-divided into several parts, which have been written by various authors, and each part may be looked on as well nigh an independent treatise. The 'General History of the Infusoria,' by Dr. Arlidge, occupies no less than 484 pages, and presents a most complete *résumé* of the existing state of knowledge respecting each of the interesting groups comprehended under that term. The same writer has also undertaken the systematic history of the Phytozoa and Protozoa—a task which will be valued by observers as furnishing the means for identification of species and for the more accurate study of their affinities and classification. The group "Rotatoria" is treated systematically by Professor Williamson, of Manchester, a naturalist whose name will be a guarantee for the work he has done; whilst the Desmidiaceæ are arranged and described by Mr. Archer, of Dublin; and the Diatomaceæ by Mr. John Ralfs, of Penzance. The last parts are sure of being highly appreciated by microscopists, for the systematic history of the Diatomaceæ presents all the originality of views and accuracy of detail which have rendered Mr. Ralfs's writings on these beings and the Desmidiæ so highly valued by naturalists throughout Europe and America.

ART. II.—*Die Brandstiftungen in Affecten und Geistesstörungen.*

Ein Beitrag zur Gerichtlichen Medicin. Von Dr. WILLERS JESSEN.

—Kiel, 1860. pp. 335.

On the Incendiarism of the Insane, &c. By Dr. W. JESSEN.

THIS volume is of too special a character to call for a lengthened notice in this journal, although it will be of particular interest to students of medical jurisprudence, and to medical men engaged in the treatment of the insane.

The subject of "pyromania"—the insane propensity to destroy by fire—has never, in Dr. Jessen's opinion, received the attention it deserves. He accordingly undertakes its complete examination, and views it in relation to the mental conditions found accompanying it, and to its association with positive mental aberration. To illustrate his subject, he has collected from various quarters a considerable number of instances of this destructive propensity, and has further added to the value of his work by presenting an historical *résumé* of the writings and opinions of other authors who have written upon it. However, as is too frequently the case, German medical writers are little acquainted with what has been produced in other countries beside their own. This defect attaches to Dr. Jessen, who, in his preliminary notice of the literature of his subject, quotes none but German authors; but this is a small matter, and detracts little from the merit of the treatise, which, we may add, is the most complete contribution to the etiology and psychology of pyromania in any language. So far as this country is concerned, we cannot, indeed,