are so excellent,—there is such a happy combination of the scientific and the practical,—and such a constant recognition of the principle that the phenomena of disease can only be rightly appreciated when those of normal or healthy action shall have been determined,—that it cannot be read without profit even by the best instructed, whether practitioners or students. We anticipate, therefore, that it will continue to maintain its ground in the estimation of the profession, notwithstanding that it now has to compete with treatises of more pretension, which have made their appearance since its first publication.

Dr. Billing still adheres to his somewhat singular plan of not dividing his book into chapters or sections, and of not affording any general idea of the subjects of which it treats by a table of contents, running-titles, or marginal titles. The index, however, has now undergone considerable enlargement, and facilitates reference to the multifarious contents of the volume.

ART. II.—*The Sea-side Book; being an Introduction to the Natural History of the British Coasts.* By W. HARVEY, M.D., M.R.I.A., Keeper of the Herbarium of the University of Dublin. New Edition.—*London*, 1849. 18mo, pp. 256. With numerous Illustrations on Wood.

THIS little book is one of the most acceptable additions to the popular literature of science, that it has ever been our fortune to meet with. Himself an accomplished and enthusiastic naturalist, Dr. Harvey has brought to his work such a combination of thorough practical acquaintance with all that he describes, and of genial enjoyment in the endeavour to make others love the pursuits which have afforded so much happiness to himself, as renders his work at once a most admirable introduction to the study of Marine Zoology and Botany, and a most agreeable companion for the sea-side visitor or resident. He does not attempt systematic description, but takes the objects as they will naturally present themselves to an observer who has his eyes about him, as he walks along the sands, clambers over a rocky shore, or explores the sea-bottom with the dredge. Thus he passes in review some of the most interesting forms of Marine Plants, Zoophytes, Molluscs, Crustaceans, and Birds; not entering into a detailed account of any one, but noticing just those points in each, which are most fraught with interest to the unscientific observer, and which are most likely to lead him to further inquiries. Among these we find some of the most remarkable novelties which recent researches have brought to light; such as the wonderful history of the development of the Medusæ, and the curious and unexpected metamorphoses of the Crustacea. We notice one or two omissions to which we would direct the author's attention, as we are sure that he must be ere long called upon for a new edition of so admirable a production. In his account of the 'Microscopic Wonders of the Sea,' he might advantageously introduce some notice of the structure and habits of the living Bryozoa, whose polypidoms are described in a preceding chapter; there is no part of the coast where some species of these do not occur; and we know of no marine objects more calculated to interest alike the scientific and the unscientific observer. Again, it seems somewhat strange that in a "Sea-Side Book" no notice whatever should be taken of Fishes; the only

mention of the class that we have encountered, being in the chapter on "the Sands and their Productions," in which a description is given of the egg of the dog-fish, well known under the name of "Mermaid's or Fairies' purse."

When we say that the work is published by Mr. Van Voorst, and that the illustrations are fully equal, in beauty and correctness, to those of the scientific treatises which have gained for him such an honorable name, we have given them the highest encomium in our power.

We add, as a specimen of our author's style, one of the passages in which he takes occasion to indicate the true spirit in which Natural History should be pursued. After pointing out the absurdity of that childish egotism, which plumes itself on the discovery of a new shell or a new sea-weed, as if any one else visiting the same spot might not have done the like, he continues—

"I am very far from condemning the pure-minded joy, one of the most delightful feelings of a naturalist, which springs freely in his heart and glistens in his eye, when first it rests upon an unknown object. This feeling is a mixture of warm affections which cannot confine themselves to a single breast, but instantly seek for sympathy. The first impulse is, to exhibit the novelty to another that he may share our delight, and that we may see him do so. And if there be none to sympathize, how naturally the grateful heart looks up and worships the Author of its enjoyment! Cold as the heart's feelings may be at other times, the fervour of the moment awakens all its better nature. This enjoyment may seem a small thing to call forth gratitude, when we are accustomed to receive so many blessings at the hand of God in a thankless or indifferent spirit. These blessings we seem to look on as our birthright, as members of *His* family; but the discovery of a new object among the works of creation acts like a special revelation, however small, to ourselves as individuals, and this feeling of individuality touches a chord in the human breast which is ever ready to vibrate. The man whose life is saved by what appears to be a special interference of Providence in his favour, feels strongly what all ought to feel, who know that at every moment of our lives the same care is exercised over us. But the care in the one case is for the general good, the interest of which often calls for individual suffering; in the other, the welfare of the individual seems the special object of providential forethought. The latter brings God, as it were, personally before us. He is no longer merely the Creator exercising oversight over a vast dominion, but he is our preserver, protecting us in our going forth and coming in. Similar, though weaker, are the feelings called forth by a closer insight into Nature, and a more intimate acquaintance with her works. When we begin the study, our conception of the Author of Nature may be diffuse—a vague idea as of some illimitable power, in ceaseless action; but the more we pursue this delightful study, the more we recognise, if we work in a proper spirit, proofs of the *personality* of God. Though now we can know Him but in part, and only see Him reflected in his works, as it were, 'through a glass darkly,' we look forward to a time when we shall behold Him 'face to face,' and shall know Him 'even as we ourselves are known.' " (p. 20.)

Convinced as we are, that there is no more healthful occupation of the mind for those who need a pursuit, and no more delightful resource for those who need a means of recreation, we cordially recommend this little volume to the notice of our readers; both for the interest which we feel sure that its perusal will excite in themselves, and for the benefit which they may confer on the young people of the families with which they may be professionally connected, by bringing it under their attention. Sure we are that the annual visit to the sea-side may be made doubly invigorating, both to body and mind, when it is occupied in the search for

objects that cannot fail to interest the mind once rightly directed to them, instead of being whiled away in the languid contemplation of the advancing and receding tide, in the frivolous literature of the marine library, or in the senseless and not always innocent gossip of the watering-place. And when it is borne in mind how rich a harvest of discovery has been reaped within only a few years, by those who have devoted even scanty opportunities and limited time to the investigation, it is obvious that the pursuit will not only have the attraction of novelty to the beginner, but that he may confidently expect to find new sources of interest continually arising before his mind, and even to contribute something of real value to the common stock of knowledge.

ART. III.—*On the Habitual Use of Opium in Singapore*. By R. LITTLE, Esq., Surgeon.—*Singapore*. 8vo, pp. 80.

THIS pamphlet has been forwarded to us, under the idea that a notice of its contents in our pages may prove somewhat instrumental in drawing attention to the abominable practice it exposes. We fear that much good will not be attainable thereby; for the home authorities have their hands sufficiently full of various physical and moral grievances, calling for redress at our own doors, without diverting their attention to matters properly within the scope of their representatives in the colony in question. The author allows that opium-smoking, with all its baneful consequences to individuals, is less injurious to society than excessive drinking, inasmuch as it does not like this excite to the commission of fearful crimes against property or persons, but merely leads to the petty pilfering sufficient to obtain the means for its continuance; while, moreover, by destroying after a while the power of provocation, it prevents that plentiful production of diseased organizations which spring from the loins of the drunkard. Even as regards the individual, the practice of opium-smoking would seem to be less destructive to life than spirit-drinking, or at all events less speedily so; for although the author takes Dr. Christison somewhat seriously to task for having expressed an opinion that opium-eating does not shorten life to the extent that *à priori* it might have been expected to do, yet his own pages show that the still more baneful practice of smoking opium, which prevails at Singapore, is often consistent with prolonged existence. However this may be, it is a dreadful practice, often commenced from mere imitation, or as an amusement; it speedily acquires so fascinating a hold of its victim, as to render his life utterly wretched and quite insupportable, unless it be periodically indulged in; and at last it gives rise to the development of chronic disease in the digestive or urinary organs, which eventually, though often remotely, terminates in death. It is a most expensive habit, the gratification of which plunges the poorer classes into the direst poverty with all its consequences.

The author estimates the population of Singapore at 70,000, of which number 40,000 are Chinese; and calculating from the amount of opium consumed, he estimates the number of opium-smokers at 15,000. It is not surprising, then, that a man evidently of a very humane disposition, and called on in his professional capacity to struggle with the results of this vicious habit, should feel anxious to abolish it, or, at all events, to limit its indulgence. Unfortunately the suggestions he is enabled to make