ing dentition is a purely physiological process, we are of opinion that very many infants of good strength and vigour undergo considerable irritation and discomfort while getting their teeth. The authors are evidently considerably in favour of the use of the gum lancet, and in this they differ from many medical men, among whom we may mention Henoch, of Berlin, who writes as follows:—"The practice introduced from England of scarifying the gums down to the coming tooth with a bistoury I have made use of in former years often enough to convince myself of its uselessness. I have found that this neither caused the tooth to appear sooner, nor influenced in the slightest degree any spasmodic attacks (especially spasmus glottidis) which chanced to be present. . . . On all these grounds I have now for many years entirely given up the scarifying; and in this I am in agreement with most medical men."

It is, of course, impossible in the space at our command for us to discuss in detail the different sections of this work, but we have said enough to give some idea of their scope and value, and we cordially recommend the volume to our readers.

Exploration of the Chest in Health and Disease. By STEPHEN SMITH BURT, M.D., Professor of Clinical Medicine and Physical Diagnosis in the New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital, &c. London: H. K. Lewis. 1889.

WHILE there are some parts of this little work deserving of commendation, we do not think it will take the place of any of the works on physical diagnosis at present in the hands of our students. The author tells us that it is the outcome of requests from his classes for a work that would embody the methods pursued by him in his teaching. If from this we may infer that the book conveys essentially the teaching given in a post-graduate course, we can only wonder what sort of teaching is given in the pre-graduate stage. But we must presume that these chapters have been written for the benefit of junior students, and that many things have been purposely omitted on account of space.

The first part of the book is devoted to physical methods of diagnosis, and the second to the diagnosis of the various diseases of the lungs and heart. This latter part is that which commends itself most to us, though even here many objections might be made—*e. g.*, to the statement that "in most instances

acute bronchitis runs its course with no abnormal physical manifestations."

The chapters on physical diagnosis, however, are those which are most unsatisfactory. Even junior students should be taught something as to the causation of the respiratory murmur, but in these pages not a word is said on that subject. Again, we see no reason for departing from the nomenclature of percussion sounds employed by Da Costa, Flint, and others in America, in common with the members of the European schools. Dr. Burt evidently thinks otherwise, for he uses the term *dulness* to mean not quite clear, or, as we say, comparatively or relatively dull; and the term *flatness* to mean absolute dulness. But it is not only his nomenclature that is at fault; his instructions as to percussion are not sufficiently clear, and he discards, as without value, the demarcation of the absolute dulnesses of organs, without giving any hint as to the lack of accuracy which surrounds the endeavours to delimit the actual boundaries of such organs as the heart and the liver. He recognises the difficulty of detecting slight dulness in the apex of a lung in the early stage of phthisis, and to obviate this difficulty he recommends percussing with the patient's back against a door, so that the latter may act as a sounding-board. Our readers may give this method a trial if they think it likely to be of value. From a professor of physical diagnosis in a post-graduate school we would have expected, moreover, that reduplication of the cardiac second sound would not have been dismissed in a word as due to want of synchronism of the two sides of the heart, an explanation long ago recognised as unsatisfactory.

There is little in this book to make it of service to the practitioner, and to the Scotch student its instruction in physical diagnosis would be very confusing.

Annual of the Universal Medical Sciences: a Yearly Report of the Progress of the General Sanitary Sciences throughout the World. Edited by CHARLES E. SAJOUS, M.D., and Seventy Associate Editors, assisted by over Two Hundred Corresponding Editors, Collaborators, and Correspondents. Illustrated with Chromo-Lithographs, Engravings, and Maps. In Five Volumes. Philadelphia, New York, and London: F. A. Davis. 1889.

WE hear of big things in America, and the present *Annual* is certainly one of the biggest things in medical publishing