MINOR MALADIES.

(Seventh Edition.)

By LEONARD WILLIAMS, M.D. Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1937. Price 10/6.

A book which presents itself in a seventh edition and has been translated from English into two foreign languages must obviously have served some useful purpose, and *Minor Maladies* by Dr. Leonard Williams stands in this position. The book has, and is intended to have, a decidedly personal note; it records the views and opinions and sometimes the prejudices of its author on many topics without pretending to treat any of its texts in an exhaustive or highly scientific fashion.

Dr. Williams evidently likes to cultivate not only the dogmatic statement but also the dramatic sentence. Afternoon tea is "a superfluous and saccharine orgie"; tobacco smoke leads "from the path of aerial righteousness into the slums and gutters of iniquity;" "sentinel juices . . . prevent maleficent bacteria from gate-crashing into the absorbent jejunum"; influenza has become "widespread and malicious in proportion as tobacco smoke has increased"; and so on. No doubt this style of writing has its sensational appeal but it hardly suggests the exercise of a considered and scientific judgment. In not a few respects Dr. Williams is anxious to proclaim himself a medical heretic and rebel, but his crusades are quite in a minor key and we doubt whether he is anything like the terrible fellow he would fain be regarded.

The new edition contains a chapter on "Minor Dietetics" and also one on "Glandular Insufficiencies"; each of these gives a fairly comprehensive and rapid view of the subject it proposes to cover and opportunities for the assertion of the favoured proposition are not neglected. The book is eminently readable and even in some measure entertaining. Its therapeutic counsels often have a decidedly confident and optimistic quality but the author supports them by instances of his personal successes in applying them. Above all is the history of the book's triumph, and this no criticism may gainsay.

PROGNOSIS.

Volume II. London. The Lancet, Ltd., 1937. 10/6 net.

Volume Two continues the high standard set by Volume One of *Prognosis*. One very important feature of this series is that the Editor has induced contributors in charge of large clinics to record their experiences, who, otherwise, had no desire, or such an opportunity, to do so. And yet it is important that such experiences should be known to lighten those of others who write text-books. The most important feature is the up-to-dateness of the prognosis based on the personal experiences of the writers.

There are fifty-eight major headings dealt with by sixty-one medicals, including apparently only one woman.

The method of attack in the bulk of them is direct, clear, and, of course, concise. The difficulties and failures are frankly spoken of, and no attempt is made to claim 100 per cent. successes. Altogether, the articles are very interesting and stimulating, and are just the kind of fresh re-statement that most practitioners will find very helpful, to weigh in with their own experiences and reflections.

In this volume the contents are, as in the first, medical, surgical, and special. Thus we have (to name a few subjects) articles on measles, tetanus, asthma and hay fever, acute osteomyelitis, arthritis, lumbago and sciatica, fractures of spinal vertebræ and os calcis, congenital heart disease, plastic surgery, cancer of the rectum, deafness, Cæsarian section, gonorrhœa in the male, disseminated sclerosis, migraine, acute and food poisoning, manic-depressive psychosis, carcinoma of the lung, eclampsia and the toxæmia of pregnancy, and pituitary tumours.

This is a book to have for reading and for reference.