

A reminder of another kind is given that too much importance should not be placed on food analysis for, in many instances, people suffer from faulty food habits. Professor Mottram also stresses the fact that the strictly scientific way of approach to a study of food analysis and dietetics as such, is not always the right course, but that sometimes the physical aspect is more important, although of course the latter consideration does involve a knowledge of the analytical value of food; and the one aspect therefore cannot be completely divorced from the other. Exceedingly interesting and informative is all that Professor Mottram has to say on the vitamins, and his words of "Practical Counsel" will be found very helpful by those interested in the application of a knowledge of dietetics.

In his introduction Professor Cathcart refers to psychological factors as they arise in dietetic treatment and Miss Wansborough, S.R.N., D.N. (Sister Dietitian at St. Thomas's Hospital) gives practical illustrations of how this aspect should enter into the arrangement of a patient's menu. She draws attention to matters of colour, texture and the like, and points out, for instance, how steamed fish, white sauce, creamed potato and purée of parsnips, would prove an unattractive combination compared with a meal in which parsley sauce is substituted for white sauce and a purée of carrots for one of parsnips. In discussing texture she shows how potato soup should not be followed by a ground rice pudding, and goes on to give practical advice to the effect that, when possible, a savoury dish should be followed by a bland one, and a bland one by one of acid flavour. She also points to the discretion to be exercised in varying the hot and cold dishes in the composition of a meal. After reference to the requirements of the body in health, as regards the constituents of diet, she goes very clearly into the effect of ill-health upon the quantity of food required; she follows this up with some general rules for drawing up menus. The contribution of Miss Abrahams, M.A., M.Sc. (Dietitian at St. Bartholomew's Hospital) is, more or less, an elaboration of what Miss Wansborough has to say. Both ladies are comprehensive and clear in their matter, and we can recommend these chapters for study by members of the nursing profession especially.

Very interesting are the different stages of diet in fever cases as enumerated by Dr. Mitman, Medical Superintendent of the River Hospitals under the L.C.C. This chapter presents curious comparisons with the latter part of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries, when the dictum that prevailed was "feed a cold and starve a fever." The "Theoretical Considerations" put forward in the same chapter prove how philistine was such a rule, for it is pointed out that, although a patient in bed requires less food than usual, the increased metabolic activity during fever makes greater the demand for it. Nevertheless, owing to anorexia, the impaired digestion prevents such demands being met at certain stages of the fever, a matter of no great importance if the fever is of short duration, but apt to result in a certain degree of starvation if it is prolonged. Into this chapter there again enters some valuable information on vitamins and their part in combating infection. Here, too, reappears the importance of considering certain relationships of psychology to diet. Explanations are given of the part played by various food constituents in conditions where there is fever.

Dr. Pearson and Dr. May deal with dietetics in connection with pulmonary tuberculosis, a subject that bristles with problems. Common mistakes in dealing with the diet of patients suffering from this disease are enumerated and the lessons conveyed thereby are more or less the old ones of "finding the mean" (*i.e.*, seeking to err neither in the direction of overfeeding nor that of underfeeding—of balancing the diet in relation to other considerations).

Dr. Shaw adds his views to those expressed by Professor Mottram when he shows that the mechanics of digestion often take precedence of indications supplied by analysis and he indicates how failure to deal with a food frequently leads to its being regarded as "indigestible" when the fact that it has proved so is due really to impairment of the mechanics of digestion in a particular case. Alterations of tension in the muscular wall of the stomach are quickly converted into sensations, often very unpleasant ones. Attention is drawn to a two-fold function of food in cases of illness—*i.e.*, to relieve symptoms and to promote cure. The guiding lines to be observed are Quantity, Quality and Regularity. Such practical teaching as this appears constantly throughout the book, and it is this that should commend it as of real practical value to the nurses and not least to the private nurses.

Very interesting is Dr. Hickling's contribution on intestinal disorders, and in it nurses will find information that will prove of practical value in the sickroom. Other important chapters deal with diet in diseases of the liver, in endocrine disorders, in kidney disease, in diseases of the cardio-vascular system and blood disorders, in nervous and mental diseases, in skin diseases, in various rheumatic conditions, and exceedingly interesting is the chapter on diet in diabetes mellitus by Dr. Bennett. Other chapters are concerned with food in pregnancy and in infancy, and at different ages and seasons.

Evidence of the completeness with which the volume covers its subject lies in the introduction of a chapter dealing with allergic conditions. The public have only recently become conscious of allergy to any extent. Probably it is a condition symptomatic of the age in which we are living to a good extent, but anyhow the subject is one that has made rapid developments of late as a branch of medical science. It may be said to range, in the different individuals addicted to it, from hay fever and the lady who is allergic to Brazil nuts down to the nurse who is allergic to dust or the proximity of possible germs, this for her patient's sake rather than her own. Anyhow, allergy proves a happy hunting ground for the neurasthenic and for some intensive research on the part of the medical man. Food allergies are, of course, unlimited; almost every person one meets seems to know of at least one food which is "poison" to him, and it is not surprising that Dr. Bray's remarks on the subject, if brief, are yet very enlightening.

It is not possible to refer to all the conditions treated of in this really valuable book, and those nurses who study its pages will add considerably to their capacity for arranging intelligently a patient's diet, a matter usually very much appreciated by the patient's friends. We have rarely come across any book on dietetics so concise and yet of such "infinite variety." Every chapter gives stimulus for thought and a desire for more knowledge, which after all is the best test of the value of any scientific book.

I. M.

NEW DRUGS FOR TREATMENT OF SLEEPING SICKNESS.

New drugs which have been discovered for the treatment of sleeping sickness were described to the International Congress on Microbiology in New York by Professor Warrington Yorke, who is head of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

The new drugs, discovered in recent research work at the school, are being tested in a serious outbreak of sleeping sickness in Sierra Leone.

It is reported that preliminary tests of the new drugs are very hopeful.

Sleeping sickness, which is most common among the natives of Africa, arises from the presence in the blood of parasites transmitted by various forms of the tsetse fly. With Europeans it is nearly always fatal.

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