

REVIEW.

THE CHEMISTRY OF FOOD AND SICK-ROOM COOKERY.*

There are few subjects which it behoves a nurse to know on which she has less precise knowledge than that of the Chemistry of Food and Sick-Room Cookery, and we welcome a book on this subject by Miss D. K. Graham, F.B.C.N., S.R.N., Examiner for the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and Lecturer to the Royal Northern Group of Hospitals, London.

In her preface the author tells us that the book has been prepared strictly in accordance with the Syllabus of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and expresses the hope that these chapters on "Food" may prove thoroughly useful, not only to nurses for their State Examinations, but to Tutors and others who may wish to refer to a book for reliable practical information.

Miss Graham states that in the feeding of patients it is necessary to study:—(1) The suitability of the food to the disease, (2) The digestibility, (3) The nourishing qualities of the food, (4) The wishes of the patient, (5) If the service is dainty, (6) If the helpings are small enough, (7) If the meals are punctual, (8) If the food is served really hot, (9) That the food is never over-seasoned or over-flavoured, (10) That there is as little work left as possible for the digestive system to do in converting the food into a fit state for absorption, (11) That the food is palatable to the taste, (12) That the diet is varied as much as possible.

The chemical analysis of an egg precedes instruction on the purposes for which eggs are used, *i.e.* as flavouring agents, for binding, and for raising cakes, puddings, etc., for protein instead of fish and meat, and for thickening purposes, *e.g.* custard.

The chemical composition of *Fish*—both white fish and oily fish—precedes the chapter on this subject.

Of *Meat* we are told that it is composed of (1) fibres, (2) gristle, (3) fat, (4) tendons, (5) extractives. In connection with its chemical analysis there are no carbohydrates in meat, but it is a good source of protein. The fibres of poultry are shorter than animal fibres. The breast of a chicken is the most digestible form of meat. Long fibres are difficult to digest. Mutton fibres are shorter and the connective tissue looser than beef. The effects of cooking upon meat are also described.

The chapter on *Poultry and Game* describes the general rules for choosing poultry, its preparation, and the methods used in cooking.

The chemical composition of green and root *Vegetables* is given, as well as that of fruits and seeds such as tomatoes, marrow, cucumber, etc., used as vegetables, the effects of cooking upon them, and the methods of their preparation.

Flour Mixtures and the leavening process are dealt with in some detail.

Chapters follow on puddings, beverages, and milk, butter and cheese, and fruits, under milk being included pasteurized, sterilized, condensed, and dried. "The advantages of dried milk are many. It may be taken as free from germs of disease and for all practical purposes as germ free. It can be kept over prolonged periods. The quantity required may be prepared for each meal, and there is no waste. Dried milk is a valuable and satisfactory food for infants." Glaxo is mentioned as amongst the best brands of dried milk.

Alcohol.—The author quotes Sir Lauder Brunton's opinion on the dietetic values of alcohol amongst which are that "in small quantities alcohol increases the secretion of the gastric juice and the movements of the stomach, and thus aids digestion; and that it is useful in exhaustion and debility," . . . that "By dilating the vessels of the skin alcohol warms the surface at the expense of the internal

organs. It is thus injurious when taken during exposure to cold, but beneficial when taken after the exposure is over, as it tends to prevent congestion of internal organs."

Part II is devoted to important chapters on Dietetic Treatment in Disease, with the special diets which are given in various diseases and the book on this account alone, would prove invaluable in the equipment of a private nurse. It is slim in form and would take up little room; but there is a wealth of information between its covers.

Useful miscellaneous recipes form the concluding chapter of the volume which we cordially commend to our readers.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC FEEDING.

Recent medical pronouncements have brought into prominence the importance of scientific feeding. The number of firms exhibiting Health Foods at the recent Food and Cookery Exhibition at Olympia reflected the progress which has been made in this direction.

The Gold Medal of Merit was awarded to Virol, Ltd., for their well-known preparation, Virol-and-Milk, and the large public already using Virol-and-Milk must be gratified to find their opinion endorsed by the judges of the Exhibition.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

Queen Mary, as usual, has given her sympathy and support to various women's needs. She graciously sent £100 in support of a women's public lodging-house for the Central London District—so as to give the Committee "a lead." It is hoped to secure a house which will have accommodation for 44 beds. Such houses are urgently needed now so many women earn their own living.

The *Renown*, a veritable floating palace gleaming silver in the sun, has steamed away this week with Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York on a six months' tour to New Zealand, Australia, and lesser isles—to convey warm goodwill from the homeland—and receive, we are sure, a glorious welcome from the peoples of these splendid Dominions. Nothing but good understanding can result from these personal visits of our younger Royalties—so finely educated as they are for the performance of their ambassadorial duties. The Duke and Duchess of York are highly esteemed at home, and will, doubtless, win approbation from our kindred overseas.

At a recent Meeting of the Académie Française, at which fifteen members were present, the majority agreed that animals have souls, though of an inferior kind.

Souls of a very superior order can be seen very clearly pleading through the eyes of dogs—with an intensity and yearning apparent to all those who love them. Since it has been made public how many thousands of these devoted animals are sacrificed through research for the supposed benefit of humanity, we have noticed men and women carefully walking their canine companions out on the chain. No more free frisking in the street. What a network of dog thieves there must be in London to meet the demands of science!

Members of a New York Congregational Church have drawn up a revised version of the Ten Commandments in which gossiping is included among the deadly sins. And well it may be.

The League of Nations Information Section has published a summary of the work of the League during the year 1926.

A bachelor tax has been approved in Italy and came into force on January 1st. The proceeds of the tax will be devoted to the National Maternity and Child Welfare Institute.

* Law and Local Government Publications, Ltd., 27 to 29, Furnival Street, E.C. 4. price 3/6.

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