

ently better able to withstand the heat and number of sterilizations."

Drains.

Concerning "Drains" we are told that Drainage is used for two purposes.

- (1) Provide an exit for toxic material or other fluids.
- (2) To control or detect hæmorrhage.

The prerequisites of a drain are:—

- (1) That it should allow the escape of septic material.
- (2) Its surface should be smooth so that it can be easily and painlessly removed.
- (3) It should lend itself readily to sterilization.
- (4) It should have good tensile strength so as not to break off in the wound on removal.
- (5) It should not have any loose threads or ragged ends.

Gauze, gutter percha, rubber sheaths, and rubber tubing are the basis of practically all drains.

Preparation of the Patient.

In dealing with the preparation of the patient the author points out that "the mental condition of the patient is a factor which has been frequently overlooked. Every individual who is about to undergo a surgical procedure should be in bed for a period of from 24 to 36 hours before the operation. An operation is an ordeal; it is a distinct strain on the nervous system, and the rest will aid the patient. A good night's sleep before the operation is absolutely essential, even if it is necessary to resort to a hypnotic."

Ideal Chemical Skin Steriliser.

The preliminary preparation of the operative field has not changed materially, we are told, in the last decade. "However there has been a constant search for the ideal chemical 'skin steriliser'." The requirements necessary for the ideal chemical skin disinfectant are then defined and the precautions necessary when tincture of iodine or picric acid are used are noted. Skin burns, if these are not observed, are frequent when tincture of iodine is used, and the warning is given to "cover all iodinated skin with towels so that the intestines do not come in contact with it as the iodine is supposed to cause intra-abdominal adhesions."

The arrangements of the chapters dealing with various operations are admirable. The definition of the condition to be dealt with, the preparation of the patient, the instruments, the steps of the operation, and "operation-pointers" present a clear picture of the procedure, and the "dictionary of operations" is most useful.

We unreservedly and cordially commend the book to the notice of our readers. It is lucid, thorough, and remarkably practical.

M. B.

"DIABETES: REASONS AND RECIPES."

We have received from Messrs. John Lane, The Bodley Head, Ltd., Vigo Street, London, W., an attractively produced and illustrated book, "Diabetes: Reasons and Recipes," by E. E. Claxton, M.B., B.S. (London), D.T.M. and H., and Lucy Burdekin, the price of which is 5s.

Dr. George Graham, F.R.C.P., who contributes the Foreword, writes that "In the past the diabetic patient who was content to eat the same meals day after day was more likely to keep well and avoid raising the blood sugar than the patient who wanted to vary his diet. The latter was apt to eat various made and fancy dishes, which often contained more carbohydrate than he expected. The numerous recipes which Miss Burdekin and Dr. Claxton have devised and tested should now enable anyone with

a good cook to have as much variety as he likes and run no risk of exceeding his allotted food."

The interest of books on diabetes lies in the fact that as fresh light is thrown upon the disease new methods of treatment are advised and adopted. The authors tell us in their preface that "the object of this book is to encourage and help anyone who has diabetes." In recent years the entire conception of the disease has been altered by treatment with insulin, and diet has become much simpler. Not very long ago, when a patient was found to be suffering from diabetes the outlook was considered hopeless. A little later, when insulin had been discovered and prepared, the outlook became definitely hopeful, but the treatment was somewhat complicated and not all could be persuaded to take the trouble to carry it out accurately. Recently, since the carbohydrate allowance of food has been so much increased, the treatment has become more successful and less onerous, and there is now more variety and choice of food. Dieting, however, is still the key to success.

"Now it is possible to say to any diabetic who thoroughly understands the principles of its rational treatment, 'It doesn't matter what you eat, provided you know what the food contains, so that you can judge how much you may take.' What a contrast to the old days, when only certain articles of food were allowed! When the result was far from happy! When starvation and fasting days were insisted upon! . . .

"The secret of success is a happy mind, and if this book is able to cheer and help those who are unfortunate enough to have contracted diabetes, the authors will feel fully rewarded."

In his "Note to Doctors," Dr. Claxton strongly advocates treatment with relatively high carbohydrates and low fat diet with sufficient insulin.

In their opening chapter the authors define diabetes as "a condition in which sugar—a normal product of digestion—fails in its function of nourishing the body and supplying energy, and abnormal products of digestion poison the system.

"At one time," they point out, "it was considered to be a failure of the body to deal with the starchy types of food, but recent work has shown that it is not only the starch and sugar that the body fails to utilise, but that the flesh and fat in food are at fault."

The important thing in the diet of a diabetic is, they claim, to obtain a *right balance* in the diet. The three main components of food are "(1) the starchy types, which include bread, flour, cereals, sweets and vegetables; these are known as carbohydrate, and include sugar. (2) the fleshy types of food, e.g., fish, meat and game; these are known as protein. (3) the fatty types of food, butter, fat of meat and vegetable oils. We also require water, mineral salts, and vitamins. Life cannot be maintained unless all these constituents of food are present in the diet."

It is the province of the doctor to prescribe the balance of food suited to the individual patient and the amount of insulin which he should receive daily. This, decided with careful testing of urine and periodical weighing, which will reveal any untoward symptoms, a diabetic patient with the help of methods of dieting given in this book and the numerous attractive recipes provided, can enjoy a varied diet approximately to the normal.

The authors are insistent that "in recent years it has been found that by increasing the carbohydrate ration results are obtained which are far superior to those in which the starch allowance is restricted. This practice makes the diet much simpler and more pleasant, and is strongly advocated. Many diabetics do extremely well when allowed those articles of food which they were expressly forbidden at one time. The ideal method of treatment in any condition due to a deficiency is to imitate Nature as far as

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