

ANNUAL REGISTER OF CHARITIES AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

We have received from Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 39, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4, "The Annual Charities Register and Digest" for 1938 (price 8s. 6d.), a book to which we look forward always with pleasure, and keep close at hand during the year.

The first division, which relates to the Charity Organisation Society of which the Central Office is at Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1, occupies some seventeen pages. The general object of the Society is, we are told, to give a definite aim to, and to direct into the most effectual channels, the large amount of benevolent force at work in England and particularly in London.

"All thoughtful people agree that poverty is a dark blot upon our social system. All deplore the enormous contrasts between the richer and the poorer classes. . . .

"Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that benevolent people who have something to spare should be anxious to employ it in the service of the poor and weak."

The Council of the Charity Organisation Society "super-vises and endeavours to strengthen and consolidate the work of District Committees. . . . It endeavours to bring into systematic co-operation the larger Metropolitan Institutions and Societies, to improve the administration of charity, and to suppress imposture."

"In the treatment of cases two main principles have been agreed upon: (1) that prior to assisting there should be sympathetic study; (2) that whatever assistance is given should be suitable and adequate. Cases in which no pecuniary or other aid is likely to produce lasting good results, are not attempted." We cordially recommend the book to our readers.

"FOOD TABLES."

We have received a useful book from Messrs. Edward Arnold & Co., 41 and 43, Maddox Street, W.1, entitled "Food Tables," by V. H. Mottram, M.A., Professor of Physiology at King's College of Household and Social Science, University of London, and Ellen M. Radloff, B.Sc., Ph.D., Lecturer in Physiology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. The book, we are told, is intended to fill a gap in the equipment of the dieticians and to supply a set of tables collected from authoritative sources of the most used of British foodstuffs. This gap has grown large, for there is no collection of figures later than 1921. In fact many dieticians still use a collection made in 1906. The publication of this book by two eminent dieticians is, therefore, timely, and it should prove of considerable value to their colleagues. The price of the book is 5s.

THE DEAR ANIMALS, Medal for Alsatian Dog.

Betty, the devoted Alsatian which saved the life of Gordon Norris, aged 2½, the son of Mr. Sidney Norris, of Hull, by keeping him warm with her body as he lay asleep on a frost-covered field, has been awarded the bronze medal of the National Canine Defence League. The child wandered from his home with the dog. Early the next morning the boy was found by two policemen sleeping in a field two two miles from his home, with the dog close to him. He was suffering from exposure, but recovered in hospital after a few hours, where the nurses, of course, rewarded this evidence of maternal devotion with tasty titbits and admiration.

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

"THE OCCUPATIONAL TREATMENT OF MENTAL ILLNESS."*

An interesting and important book just published is "The Occupational Treatment of Mental Illness," by John Ivison Russell, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.F.P.S. (Glasgow), D.P.M., with a Foreword by William Rees-Thomas, M.D., B.S., F.R.C.P. (Lond.), Dipl. Psych. Med. (Camb.), Senior Medical Commissioner, Board of Control.

In his Foreword Dr. Rees-Thomas says that the history of occupation therapy goes back a hundred years and more. In 1841 Dr. Samuel Tuke, of the Retreat, York, wrote, "It is due to the memory of the late Sir William Ellis, to bear in mind, that to him we are indebted for the first extensive and successful experiment to introduce labour systematically into our public asylums. He carried it out at Wakefield with a skill, vigour and kindness towards the patients, which were alike creditable to his understanding and his heart. He first proved that there was less danger from putting the spade and the hoe into the hands of a large proportion of insane persons than from shutting them up together in idleness, though under the guard of straps, straitwaistcoats, or chains.

"In the Aberdeen Asylum in which the labour system is extensively introduced, we were particularly pleased with the state of the lowest class of women patients—chiefly in an idiotic and demented state. All of these but one—and she was in a state of temporary active mania—were employed in picking wool, or some other simple occupation. . . . These dismal looking objects, cringing in the corners of the rooms, or squatting on the ground almost lost to human form, are here not to be seen."

One can imagine no greater relief and consequently benefit to these hapless patients than to have something to occupy their minds and hands, and consequently more benefit remedially, instead of sitting with both unoccupied, brooding over their forlorn condition.

In his preface the author tells us that "the book has been prepared with the needs of the mental hospital nurse primarily in view, but it is hoped that it may prove helpful also to the occupation therapist and to others who are concerned with the welfare of patients in mental hospitals.

"The reader may think that the importance of handicraft technique has been unduly minimised, and it may be well, therefore, to state that these notes have not been written for apprentice craftsmen, but for the student of the art of mind-healing. To him the crafts are his instruments, and only so far as they are instrumental have they been considered."

Dr. Russell states that "successive generations have repeatedly endorsed the ancient maxim of Galen that 'Employment is nature's best physician and is essential to human happiness,' but perhaps the greatest impetus towards its universal recognition was the successful use of therapeutic occupation in military hospitals during the Great War. Naturally, the inmates of a war hospital enjoy a keener public sympathy, at least while war continues, than those of less romantic institutions, and it is therefore not surprising that the wretched effect of prolonged inactivity gained a wider recognition than ever before when it was found to delay the recovery of the wounded soldier.

"It should be noted, however, that although occupation therapy owes much of its present favour to experience in the treatment of general medical and surgical disabilities, it is essentially a psychological measure and should not

*Baillièrè, Tindall & Cox, 7 & 8, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.2; price, 6s.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)