

of our work." When leaving Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital a sum of money was collected to present to her as a testimonial. She would not accept it for herself, but gave it to endow a Medal to be awarded every three years to the best Nurse. Again, when she was offered the Royal Red Cross at the end of the Great War for the valuable work she had done in organising the Dublin University Hospital for Wounded Soldiers, she declined the honour, as she considered it was undeserved.

In later years Miss Huxley's energies extended further afield than her own profession. She was deeply interested in the Housing question, and a crescent of houses in Dublin bears her name. She contributed liberally to the building fund. She was a frequent visitor to the Royal Hospital for Incurables, encouraging some of the patients to do gardening, and collecting plants from her friends for this purpose. At Christmas she gave theatre tickets to those who were able to go, and arranged cinema shows for others.

Irish Nurses owe more to Miss Huxley's devoted work than anyone knows, and she set us all an example hard to follow.

Alice Reeves.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

LEAKING GAS NO SMELL.

Resident in Westminster, we have twice perceived a very insidious escape of gas—imperceptible apparently by the olfactory nerves of those responsible for fractures in a gas main pipe. The following report is of interest and should act as a warning to those responsible for our gas supply.

A fracture in a gas main was stated at a Westminster inquest recently to have resulted in the death of Arthur Collinson Davies, aged 35, a chauffeur employed by the Duchess of Westminster, of Eccleston Square, S.W.

It was stated that gas entered a garage through a pipe which carried the electric cable and filtered through to Davies' kitchenette above.

Sir Bernard Spilsbury said that if gas escaped through soil it might be odourless.

A person might not realise that anything was wrong until he suddenly collapsed. He would be absolutely helpless as soon as his muscles gave way.

Surely there should be some method by which outside gas pipes should be compulsorily inspected, and also a very heavy penalty enforced for loss of life from imperfect outside pipes. We feel seriously on this matter as the organ of smell is apparently non-existent in many persons' physical equipment.

CROYDON INQUIRY.

The Cost of Typhoid Claims.

Croydon Council has asked the Ministry of Health for permission to borrow £92,169, the cost of settling claims in the Croydon typhoid outbreak of 1937.

The Ministry directed a public inquiry into the application, to be held at Croydon Town Hall on February 1st.

The £92,169 is the cost of settling 260 claims; another 80 cases have still to be settled.

At the enquiry the fact was revealed that claims for damages may eventually cost the Corporation £125,000, was disclosed.

The Town Clerk stated that 238 writs were served on the Corporation, including 35 claims in respect of death.

One action was treated as a test case, and after the corporation had been found liable negotiations for the settlement of the other actions had resulted in the disposal of 226 without further litigation.

"DIET IN HEALTH AND DISEASE."*

This work on "Diet in Health and Disease" is edited by Sir Humphry Rolleston, Bt., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., M.D., F.R.C.P., and Alan Moncrieff, M.D., F.R.C.P. with an introduction by E. P. Cathcart, C.B.E., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S., Regius Professor of Physiology, University of Glasgow.

This volume is the fourth of a series of publications which the publishers are issuing in conjunction with *The Practitioner*. It consists largely of articles, by various well-known authorities, which have appeared in *The Practitioner* and have been recently revised and brought up to date, a matter of great importance in these days when such rapid development goes on in every branch of medicine and not least in that branch which pertains to dietetics.

Much expert research has gone to produce this work, and it is extraordinary to find how the various contributors have avoided repetition and conflict of views throughout its pages. The result is that we have before us an excellent book for reference and of much practical value, not alone to medical men, but to hygienists generally. The wealth of analytical and dietary tables adds enormously to the value of the work and to the ease with which the different aspects of dietetics can be studied. These tables alone would make the volume a *vade mecum* for those whose business it is to draw up diet sheets either for people in health or those who have contracted illness of one sort or another.

The book appears to be intended primarily for members of the medical profession, and in this it is symptomatic of progress because, although many fine works on food have appeared from time to time, it is only within comparatively recent years that dietetics have had any important place in the curriculum of the medical student; matters have altered in that respect now, for more and more far reaching has become the importance of a knowledge of dietetics, in practically every branch of medicine.

But while the value of the book to medical men is great, we should say that, owing to its conciseness and scope, it should not prove less so to nurses, especially to those who are not working so completely under medical direction, as, for instance, a ward sister is.

There is a fine introductory chapter by Professor Cathcart, and we should like to quote from this: "As a physiologist who is intensely interested in the problems of food and nutrition, I am always sorry for the clinician who tries, in the best scientific manner, to translate academic research work carried out, unfortunately, for the most part on the lower animals, with different metabolic rates and life span, into terms of practical bedside dietetics. Many even of those who are particularly interested in food and nutrition seem to forget that the science is still young, and the basis not yet well established." The Professor then goes on to quote the remarks of Burnet and Aykroyd to the same effect in their report published by the Health Section of the League of Nations. From this latter point of view Professor Mottram does wisely to make use of the table showing the international vitamin units. In all matters relating to such tables, however, it is advisable to write with caution, for constantly new knowledge is being acquired, knowledge very illusive in its character. In studying such analysis for practical purposes, it is well to keep in mind that no analysis table can be depended upon entirely. The same type of vegetables can never be said to contain a similar amount of any vitamin from a weight to weight point of view; one cabbage might have been longer in the green-grocer's shop, for instance, than another, and this would affect very much the vitamin content. Milk also varies considerably according to how the cows are fed and housed. But, bearing in mind such qualifying statements, the tables of analysis given throughout the book are most valuable.

*Eyre & Spottiswoode, London. Price 14s. net.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)