

Book Reviews.

Daughters of Britain.* By Vera Douie.

THIS little book certainly gives a most impressive survey of the magnificent work done by British women during the war. Quite obviously, the author has wide technical, and specialised knowledge and is well equipped to write such a detailed account of the activities of the various Services, and other groups of women during those terrible war years. She has cleverly interwoven dust-dry statistics with the most moving descriptions of individual acts of heroism; the latter calculated to bring a lump into the throats of the most casual readers.

One is almost convinced that if Britain can produce women of the calibre revealed in Miss Douie's book, all is not lost and the outlook for our country cannot be grim. Great qualities of heart and brain and unbelievable acts of self-sacrifice shine brightly from the paragraphs, and one is proud and delighted by the abundance of initiative, sound judgment and leadership which was evinced by our Women. One is truly amazed to learn of the variety of tasks undertaken by women of all ages (from 16 years to 90 years), all so cleverly and successfully terminated. In almost all circumstances they were proved to be the equal of man, and in many cases, one woman replaced one man and did the work as well as the men. Where lightness of touch and dexterity was required, the women were found to be superior to the men.

The book is well written, obviously authentic, and is as precise and instructive as a text-book and will, no doubt, be valuable as a reference book for students. It is, however, more precious than that. It is a truly human document, of the extraordinary deeds of ordinary women drawn from all classes of society, to succour their country in its most dire peril. They rose up in their thousands and left their homes and their beloved children to live in cramped and strangest quarters, to do almost inhuman tasks in all theatres of the war. They took their lives in their hands to give love and service to their fellow-countrymen, whilst those remaining behind kept the home-fires burning and the factory furnaces blazing, and helped to preserve their England for future generations. We wish the book all the success it deserves, for it is truly great.

*To be obtained from the Author, 12, Charlbury Road, Oxford. Price 7s. 6d.

Medical and Nursing Dictionary and Encyclopaedia.† By Evelyn Pearce.

This Alphabetical Text-book of Medical and Nursing Terms and procedures is now appearing in its ninth edition, which, in itself, is an unsolicited testimony to its intrinsic worth and popularity. Like other works by the same author it is fully explanatory, comprehensive and most instructive. It is thoroughly up-to-date and well-revised and is much to be recommended. Its sphere of usefulness will be wide, for it will assuredly take its place as a standard reference in Schools of Nursing and Medicine, and in Senior Schools where the Pre-Nursing Course is established, also in the training centres of the British Red Cross Society and St. John's.

†Faber & Faber, Ltd., 24, Russell Square, W.C.1. Price 17s. 6d. net.

Tuberculosis Nursing.‡ By Jessie J. Eyre.

This book is an intellectual exposition of tuberculosis in all aspects which affects the nurse, and it should go far towards breaking down the heart-rendering aversion to nursing in sanatoria. It clearly reveals that tuberculosis is not by any means a hopeless condition with a dire prognosis, but rather an interlude of sickness, unfortunate for the patient temporarily, which only requires the right environment and good nursing and diet for a successful cure.

The chapters on General Nursing and the Hygiene of the Wards, etc., are similar to those found in other good text-

books; but those chapters dealing with Specialised Surgery and Treatments are arresting and most instructive for they are written in a most persuasive style. Chapter VIII (The Feeding of the Tuberculosis Patient) could be dealt with more fully, for the peace and harmony of the institution—so necessary for the well-being of the patients—can be torn assunder by the unsuccessful and indifferent feeding of such patients.

The book itself, so highly to be recommended, is most attractively bound and beautifully arranged in well defined paragraphs. Excellent paper has wisely been chosen, and the type is clear and bold with good headings. It is a fine work and the intellectual author is to be congratulated on the extent of her knowledge so explicitly presented to her readers. One feels that such a choice text-book might have appealed to a wider reading public with a better choice of title, for it cannot be denied that Tuberculosis Nursing has not yet begun to be popular with young women desirous of becoming nurses.

G.M.H. (S.R.N., D.N.Lond.)

‡H. K. Lewis & Co., Ltd., 136, Gower Street, London, W.C.1. Price 21s. net.

Queen's Institute of District Nursing.

The following report on midwifery cases attended by the Queen's Nurses and Village and other Nurse Midwives employed by certain Local Health Authorities in membership with, and the County and District Nursing Associations affiliated to, the Queen's Institute shows the results for the year ended December 31st, 1948.

The maternal mortality rate of .69 per 1,000 total births is the lowest ever recorded and pays great tribute to the care and skill of the midwives.

Of the 48 maternal deaths recorded in this report, 27 occurred in hospital, 26 of these being classified under the "accidents of labour," a term which includes ante- and post-partum haemorrhage, obstetric shock, heart failure, etc.

It is again pointed out that these figures include every expectant mother booked with the midwife and that each case is followed to the end, whether the patient continues to be attended by the midwife as such, or for reasons of abnormality is transferred to the care of a doctor or to hospital. The figures given in this report therefore include all such cases.

Number of cases attended (no doctor engaged for the confinement), 69,380 (a decrease of 26,247 on 1947 figures).

Total number of midwives, 3,592, of which 1,557 were Queen's Nurses (a decrease of 710) and 2,030 were Village and other Nurse Midwives (a decrease of 415).

Of the patients attended, 14,861 were primiparae (21.34 per cent.).

The number of *maternal deaths* was 48, a maternal mortality rate of .69 per thousand.

Maternity Nursing.

Number of cases attended (doctor engaged, midwife acting as maternity nurse), 31,396 (a decrease of 14,717 on 1947 figures).

Number of maternal deaths, 18 (.57 per thousand). Three deaths (33.3 per cent.) were due to miscarriage. These being doctors' cases, the details were not verified.

Over 116,000 Gifts of Blood.

Gifts of Blood to the National Blood Transfusion Service for Hospitals in England and Wales during the September quarter this year were the highest since the war. They totalled 116,021, as against 95,301 in the comparable quarter last year.

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