

tions, of little value. The two exceptions are first, strict confinement to bed and avoidance of physical activity in any case in which a preparalytic meningeal stage might be suspected to be present; and secondly, postponement, wherever possible, of operations upon the throat, nose, or mouth during the prevalence of poliomyelitis.

Enteric fever.—There were 348 corrected notifications of, and 38 deaths from, typhoid fever in 1948, and 373 corrected notifications of, and 10 deaths from, paratyphoid fever. Most of the notifications are those of single sporadic cases.

This country continued to enjoy the low incidence of enteric fever of recent years, and in this respect was more fortunate than many European countries, in which the war years saw a greatly increased prevalence that has persisted in the post-war years.

In its control the first objective is to identify the individual carrier, who, in almost every case, is the source of the outbreak.

Unlike typhoid fever, paratyphoid fever is seldom water-borne, but usually results from infection of food by a food handler suffering from a transitory infection which does not indispose him, and only on rare occasions is a chronic carrier identified as the source. Milk, ice cream and cream-filled confectionery are, at the present time, the usual vehicles. There are new powers that should give reasonably good control over the two first named.

In the treatment of enteric fever the new drug, chloromycetin (chloramphenicol P.D.) promises further to reduce the case fatality.

Dysentery.—Notifications increased 35 per cent. to 5,084, but deaths, in the paradoxical way associated with the recent epidemiology of bacterial dysentery, declined to 62, the fewest ever recorded.

A substantial and very welcome reduction in deaths from enteritis and diarrhoea in children under two years occurred during the year, and outbreaks of epidemic diarrhoea of unknown origin in infants, which had been a distressing feature since 1945, were less often reported.

Sir Wilson Jameson reminds mothers that in breast feeding they themselves have an excellent defence for their children against infant diarrhoea, which they alone can provide, and that it is the salvation of many babies.

Food Poisoning.—Outbreaks were more numerous (or perhaps more investigated) than ever, those investigated having risen from 412 in 1945 to 964 in 1948. Of the 962 outbreaks that appeared to be of bacterial origin 908 were caused by a member of the Salmonella group. Four-fifths of these salmonella outbreaks, however, affected single patients only.

Food poisoning is largely preventable and could be abolished if everyone realised the precautions necessary when dealing with food.

First-class equipment and the best methods of manufacture will fail if a person handling food is suffering from some septic condition of the hands, nose or throat, or has forgotten to wash before beginning work or after visiting the closet. Education is required of employers and employees in the trade, of school children and of the general public.

Many local authorities are encouraging suppliers to supply and consumers to demand clean foods.

Venereal Diseases.

The steep fall in the clinic figures for early syphilis in 1947 continued in 1948, but was less marked in some large seaports and there still seem to be considerable reservoirs of infection in a few great inland cities. Gonorrhoea has also declined.

Penicillin continues to fulfil its early promise as an effective therapeutic agent in both diseases and their treatment has been both simplified and shortened by its use.

Cancer.

Deaths from cancer in 1948 numbered 79,537, an increase of 1,687 upon those in 1947. Male deaths numbered 40,130, an increase of 1,187, and female 39,407, an increase of 500. These increases are largely accounted for by the greater number of persons living at the ages most subject to cancer, but there was a slight increase in the comparative mortality index for males. For females the index declined slightly. Two-thirds of the male increase was due to cancer of the respiratory system.

The policy of centralisation, on the principle that cancer can only be effectively treated in a small number of fully equipped hospitals with which are associated all necessary laboratory and research facilities, is held to have put this country ahead of many other countries in the general management of cancer.

Mental Health.

Few appreciate the size or importance of the problem of mental illness. At the end of 1948 there were in England and Wales approximately 200,000 beds for mental illness and mental defectives and 315,000 beds for *all other types of illness*. The total number of mentally disordered and defective patients under care at the end of 1948, was respectively 145,779 and 54,887.

At the end of 1948 it was estimated that approximately another 3,000 male and 8,000 female nurses were required.

The great advances in the physical treatment of mental disease are described—malarial therapy, therapeutic convulsion treatment, insulin shock treatment and leucotomy—all empirical methods which have opened up new fields of treatment and research. They have given a great impetus to psychiatry.

To be Concluded

Reviews.

Methods of Teaching in Schools of Nursing.*

By Alice B. Brethorst, R.N., Ph.D.

THE AIM OF THIS BOOK is to act as a guide to Tutors or would-be Tutors in our profession, and each chapter deals individually with the methods of learning and the necessity for such methods.

However, whilst the book provides easy reading, it does not appear to be applicable to the requirements of the tutor in Britain. The matter is interesting and there is little doubt must obviously prove of benefit abroad, where time would seem to be limitless and one would presume that theory plays the greater part in the nurse's education.

*W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia and London. Price 20/-

Introduction to Psychiatric Nursing †

By Marion E. Kalkman, R.N.

This book should be regarded as one of our most valuable additions to previous works on the subject of psychiatric nursing. One would like to think it might form part of the reading of all student nurses. The book gives enlightenment which should prove invaluable in the hospital wards and in wider fields beyond. A. R. BUNCH, S.R.N.

†McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Aldwych House, London, W.C.2. Price 32/-

A Histology of the Body Tissues ‡

By Margaret Gillison.

This is indeed a very valuable book for Student Nurses and students of biology or those intending to teach in the preliminary training school. The entire text is written in

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