

## Reviews

### PRINCIPLES OF NUTRITION

*Nutrition and National Health*; being the Cantor Lectures delivered before the Royal Society of Arts, 1936. By Major-General Sir Robert McCarrison, M.D. (Pp. 75; illustrated. 6s.) London: Faber and Faber, 1944.

*Rose's Foundations of Nutrition*. Fourth edition. Revised by Grace MacLeod, Ph.D., and Clara Mae Taylor, Ph.D. (Pp. 594, including an appendix of 190 pages; illustrated. \$3.75.) New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

What was sound teaching in nutrition in 1936 is still sound to-day, and the re-publication of Sir Robert McCarrison's lectures is welcomed. In them he has given a short account of his experiences in the relation of diet to health and disease in India, supported mostly by his own experimental work on rats. He has brought his knowledge of certain seriously deficient Indian diets to bear on the diets of the British people. With a breadth of view which is very stimulating he is able to show that the effects of partial deficiencies may be at least as serious (e.g., in lack of resistance to infection) as those of certain more nearly total deficiencies (e.g., in rickets). His teaching is always constructive. He shows how poor diets may be made good, simply and cheaply, and he pleads for wider education (not only of the poorer classes) on the constitution of good healthy diets, and particularly on the value of whole wheat, milk, and vegetables. The book will be read with pleasurable appreciation by many people, and not least by those who, by now, may be getting rather tired of the "textbook" kind of writing on the subject of nutrition.

*Rose's Foundations of Nutrition* has been largely revised by two of Prof. Rose's friends who had worked in the same department with her for many years, and with whom she had discussed new arrangements and additions to her book for its next edition. The new arrangements are the result of further experience gained in teaching the principles and practice of nutrition to students with many different backgrounds. The additions are the result of the ever-increasing volume of research work which is being carried out in laboratories all over the world, and of the increasing interest in and even legislation for the practical application of the findings to human dietaries. The more recently discovered vitamins—riboflavin, nicotinic acid, pyridoxine, pantothenic acid, para-aminobenzoic acid, biotin, choline, folic acid, inositol, vitamins K, M, and P, the grass-juice factor, and the milk factor—are treated as fully as present knowledge and the scope of the book demand. Daily requirements of calories, protein, calcium, iron, vitamins A, B<sub>1</sub>, C, D, riboflavin, and nicotinic acid are accepted in the amounts proposed by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council, U.S.A. Particular foods—e.g., foods derived from grain, vegetables and fruits, eggs, cheese, nuts, meat and other flesh foods, fats, sugars and other sweets—are each considered as a whole. The construction of adequate diets for adults, mothers, babies, pre-school and kindergarten children are treated in a capable and practical manner, with enough evidence given in an interesting form to make the reader see how well worth while it is to give the thought and trouble necessary to secure an adequate diet for human beings of all ages and of all ranks of life.

### A YEARBOOK OF HEALTH INSTRUCTION

*Health Instruction Yearbook*. Compiled by Oliver E. Byrd, Ed.D. (Pp. 308. 18s. 6d.) California: Stanford University Press; London: Oxford University Press.

In order to improve health education in American schools and institutions of higher learning Prof. Oliver E. Byrd, director of health education at Stanford University, has published a comprehensive yearbook, the first of an intended annual series. It is designed for the use of teachers of hygiene, school nurses, school administrators, students, and others who desire to know of the developments in the field of health, and it seems extremely suitable for the purpose. It includes an enormous mass of reliable and up-to-date information, derived mostly from American sources but including many references to experiences in Britain and other countries. Some of its

chapters are so full of facts and figures as to be slightly indigestible for the general reader, but the information should prove useful for reference.

Among the twenty chapters will be found a lengthy one on nutrition and health. This includes an interesting sidelight on the extraordinary variety of peoples now incorporated in the British Army. For them no fewer than 130 different ration scales of food have to be provided. Though we in this country may think that ration cards are a worry, we must pity the average Swede, who has at least 25 cards in current use, and has to read a sort of stock market report whenever he goes out to shop. In the chapter on exercise and mechanics we read that of the first two million men examined in America for military service, 50% had to be rejected, almost all of them for physical and mental defects. The chapter on mental health and disease records that the Nazis at first tried to whip their soldiers into shape by brutality, punishment, and other rough treatment, but that on the advice of their psychologists they found it advantageous to make military life attractive, to assist instead of to punish, and to play up the group spirit. Officers were required to be informal with their men in contrast to the old Prussian concept. The long chapter on infection and immunity deals rather fully with malaria and venereal disease, while there are shorter chapters on habit-forming substances and on safety (especially traffic accidents). From the chapter on family health it is surprising to learn that over 40% of the native Americans living in the United States (in 1940) were not registered at the time of birth. A long chapter on school health is followed by shorter ones on occupational health and community health services. In the last chapter, on trends and probabilities, it is stated that a Bill was introduced in the Senate in 1943 which proposes a single unified system of national social insurance. It resembles the Beveridge plan in many respects. Another item of information relates to a scheme which is said to be unique in municipal history. The City of New York has contracted to pay the Public Health Research Institute \$100,000 a year for fundamental medical research and investigation.

### A HANDBOOK ON V.D.

*Handbook of Diagnosis and Treatment of Venereal Diseases*. By A. E. W. McLachlan, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., F.R.S.Ed. (Pp. 364; illustrated. 15s., plus 7d. postage.) Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone, 1944.

When an author sets himself the task of writing a book on a medical subject he should, like an orator or a preacher, have two main objects in view: first, to gain the attention of those whom he is addressing, and, secondly, to hold it. Dr. McLachlan in his *Handbook of Diagnosis and Treatment of Venereal Diseases* certainly succeeds in the former. This is an attractive little book of convenient size, crammed with useful information and adorned with numerous figures—many of them beautifully reproduced in colour; in fact it would be hard to find anywhere coloured plates which depict the lesions of syphilis more faithfully. It is in regard to the second desideratum that we find him less successful. The style is ponderous, not to say pedantic, tautology is frequent, and long words are used where simple short ones would meet the case.

The essential points in the diagnosis of syphilis, and the signs of the disease in its various stages, are set out with commendable clarity, and the treatment of the disease is in keeping with modern British teaching; that is to say, the concurrent-intermittent system, using neoarsphenamine and bismuth, is the one recommended. Gonorrhoea is dealt with at some length, and the sulphonamides are skilfully handled—not given in inadequate doses, as occurs only too commonly nowadays. Apparently the subject-matter of this book had been in hand for some time before publication, since, of the various recent intensive methods of treating syphilis, only the five-day method is mentioned, and the word "penicillin" does not occur in connexion with the treatment of either gonorrhoea or syphilis. Sulphonamide-resistant gonorrhoea is rearing its ugly head more and more, and often taxes the ingenuity of the experienced venereologist, to say nothing of the general practitioner. A fuller section on this subject would have added greatly to the value of the book. Besides sections on syphilis, gonorrhoea, and chancroid there is a chapter on urethroscopy which is particularly good, and, finally, one on other conditions