

with the impression that mustard gas was a harmless boggy, whereas experience teaches that an area that has been plastered with this substance is a highly unpleasant and dangerous place of residence and also is extremely difficult to clean up. So much nonsense has been talked about the dangers of poison gas that a counterblast is welcome; but it is desirable not to err on the other side by unduly minimizing the dangers, since, in the unhappy event of air raids on Britain becoming realities instead of fears of the future, carelessness and lack of preparation might be worse dangers than panic. Furthermore panic may be aroused not only by exaggerated fears but also by approaching a real danger with unwarranted optimism.

DIETETICS

Treatment by Diet. By Clifford J. Barborka, R.S., M.S., M.D., D.Sc., F.A.C.P. Third edition, revised. (Pp. 642; illustrated. 21s. net.) Philadelphia, London, New York, Montreal: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1937.

Dr. Barborka's book on treatment by diet, which appeared first in 1934, has now been issued in a third edition. The general scope of the volume, an earlier edition of which was reviewed in this *Journal* in July, 1935, is essentially unchanged. After an introductory section on the dietary requirements in health, dietetic treatment of disease is discussed in detail. In some diseases dieting is of paramount importance; in all it must be considered by the attending physician. Each disease heading has a short statement of the dietetic indications, and these are then worked out in a series of set diets which may be immediately adapted to the particular case. The book is to be recommended as a useful addition to the reference books beside the consulting-room desk, even allowing for the differences of foods which are found on American and English tables. Most of the sections are well prepared and orthodox; in dealing with gout, though many gouty patients are benefited by reduction of total intake, we cannot agree with the high carbohydrate diet recommended by the author. A general reduction in diet, giving adequate protein provided it is of low-purine content, is, we believe, suitable in practice.

Notes on Books

L'Année Thérapeutique for 1937 (Masson, 25 fr.) is the twelfth of a series which aims at giving an annual summary of recent advances in medical treatment. The author has drawn his information from recent publications in France and abroad, and presents the work of the year under the headings of certain diseases and their symptoms and means of alleviation; modern methods of treatment in anaesthesia, radiotherapy, autohaemotherapy, and artificial fever; and new medication. Among the latter, mandelic acid, the new forms of insulin and compounds of barbiturates, para-aminophenylsulphamide (prontosil, etc.), and recent progress in knowledge of vitamins are dealt with. The result is a considered review of modern therapeutics, and is not merely a compilation. There is a good index, and the cross-reference arrangement gives a useful conspectus of recent advances.

To Drink or not to Drink, by CHARLES H. DURFEE, Ph.D., is published by Longmans, Green (6s.). The problem of alcoholism must always be an interesting and important one, and recent legislation in America and its repeal have raised this question in an acute form in that country. The present volume is an exposition by an educational psychologist of his method of treating patients by making them work out their emotional reactions in manual tasks on the farm colony which he has organized,

together with a certain amount of simple psychological discussion. Most of those who have studied the problem will agree with the author that alcohol is but a symptom of an underlying personality problem, and that it is not enough for the patient simply to know why he is alcoholic; he must alter his emotional attitude towards life and learn to live without alcohol. The methods advocated by Dr. Durfee will undoubtedly be successful in some cases, but it would be a mistake to think that in this volume the subject has been covered completely or the last word said on the treatment of alcoholism.

Preparations and Appliances

SET OF NON-SLIPPING HYSTERECTOMY CLAMPS

Mr. KENNETH McMILLAN, F.R.C.S., honorary surgeon, Birmingham and Midland Hospital for Women and Birmingham Maternity Hospital, writes:

The two main features of these clamps are that the blades are deeply grooved longitudinally instead of transversely, and that the groovings articulate accurately. This longitudinal grooving has been used before, but the vertical depth of the blades was insufficient to prevent distortion when gripping tough tissues, so that the tissue slipped out frequently, particularly when clamping the vagina.

The complete set consists of two angled ovarian pedicle clamps, two slightly curved uterine artery clamps of modified La Foure pattern, two straight cervical artery clamps, and two very powerful curved vaginal clamps. The ovarian clamps are angled so that the handles hang down over the edge of the wound out of the surgeon's way.

In section, the blades represent an isosceles triangle, the two long sides giving a much stronger grip on the tissues than the short base of the ordinary clamp. The shoulder at A prevents the tissues from being cut through, and the edge at B is finished quite bluntly for the same reason. Thus, tissue paper can be held firmly without cutting or slipping, as well as the toughest pedicles. The jaws of the straight cervical artery clamps are of the same design, and produce a most satisfactory pedicle to tie in a rather inaccessible and deep position. The uterine artery clamps are of the same general design as La Foure's pattern, but with the grooves in the jaws deepened and running longitudinally.

The powerful vaginal clamps are deliberately made heavy enough to avoid any distortion under load. The curved jaws are deeply grooved longitudinally and the grooves articulate accurately as shown in the enlarged section illustrated here. The jaws are also tapered from hinge to tip, so that when the pair of clamps are used, tip to tip, across the vagina, and a continuous suture applied round them from one side to the other, each clamp can be withdrawn and the suture pulled tight without the vaginal edges opening.

In addition to their special use in gynaecology, it is possible the clamps may prove useful in general surgery as well. Messrs. Philip Harris and Co. (1913), Ltd., of Birmingham have kindly made them for me. Rough unpolished models were first made and tried at operations until the right spring and grip were obtained for each pair.

