

Nutrition and Catering

THE report of the Nutrition Committee of the British Medical Association, issued in November 1933, and reviewed in NATURE of January 13, 1934 (133, 53), was designed to determine the minimum weekly expenditure on foodstuffs which would maintain in health and working capacity families of various sizes. A supplementary pamphlet is now issued to be of practical help to the housewife*.

The translation of food schedules into appetising meals was first undertaken by teachers of domestic science who attended the summer school of the Board of Education in London in 1934. The B.M.A. specimen diet No. 16 for a man, wife and three children was the chosen model. Improvements were introduced to make more variety without increasing cost. Menus for the principal meals for three weeks have been planned, and the dishes for each day illustrated in colour. Shopping lists of food quantities and recipes are included, and a table of food values. Owing to local and seasonal variations in prices the total cost is not here estimated, but in the original report the average price was assessed at 5s. 5½d. per man weekly.

The American Medical Association has for many years concerned itself with teaching the public the principles of hygiene, including proper nutrition. We welcome this evidence that the B.M.A. is awakening to the fact that the fight against malnutrition is at the present time the most important problem in preventive medicine. The manner in which the information is presented in this pamphlet is simple and attractive, and beyond criticism, but the nature of

* "Family Meals and Catering." Pp. 27 + 3 plates. (London: British Medical Association, 1935.) 6d.

the diet recommended is not so faultless. The principles of the newer knowledge of nutrition have not been applied; there is close adherence to the obsolete standards of the pre-vitamin era with the focus too exclusively on calories and an unnecessarily high total protein ratio. The supply of vitamins and minerals is sub-optimal. The proportion of fat, and therefore of fat-soluble vitamins, is admittedly low.

The sum allowed weekly for fresh fruits and vegetables has been cut down from the 2s. 6d. allowed in the first report to a scanty 1s. 11d. for a family of five; the amount of vitamin C is further reduced by pickling some vegetables. No advisory note is inserted that *wholemeal* flour and bread provide for the same money better value than white cereal products in respect to quality of protein, vitamins and mineral salts. If, as is probable, white bread, etc., are used, 60 per cent of the total calories are derived from over-refined foodstuffs lacking vitamins and deficient in mineral salts, and leading inevitably to malnutrition. Where money is short the best slogan is that advocated by Prof. Sherman, 'no calories without vitamins'.

The health value of this diet would be greatly improved by an increase of butter or milk and of green vegetables; by a decrease in sugar; by replacing white cereals, sago, etc., by whole cereals; by decreasing the total cereals and increasing the amount of potatoes. As a basis for planning healthy and inexpensive diets Dr. Mikkel Hindhede's book on health by correct and simple diet, reviewed in NATURE of June 22, 1935 (135, 1016), might with advantage be consulted.

Universities and Business Training

AT the discussion on "The Universities and Business" arranged by the Department of Industrial Co-operation, Section F (Economic Science and Statistics), at the British Association meeting at Norwich on September 5, Dr. J. A. Bowie discussed the need for more intimate co-operation and suggested that British university schools of business were supplying a negligible percentage of the men required for administrative positions in industry and commerce. Dr. Bowie estimated that over the whole of British industry there were about one million suitable appointments for the business graduate. If the British schools of business were supplying the administrative grade of employee at the same rate as the replenishment in the closed professions, they should be producing about 40,000 graduates annually instead of the actual 200-300.

It was not suggested that such graduates were entitled at once to a responsible managerial post, but the importance of finding them a progressive post leading to such positions was stressed. Dr. Bowie urged that the main reason for the low output of graduates from the university schools of business in

Great Britain lay in lack of close working association between education and business. He considered that academic ideas had influenced too largely the commercial courses in Great Britain, which should be modelled on those of the medical school rather than the arts course.

University education for business should aim at giving the student a knowledge of the facts and principles relating to the nature and functions of business and our economic institutions; the capacity for disciplined thinking, for logical analysis and reasoning with respect to the problem of business and of modern society; facility in oral and written expression; an acquaintance with the operating tools of management such as general and cost accounting; and personal effectiveness including the capacity for job analysis and co-operation. At present Dr. Bowie considered that insufficient attention was paid to the development of facility in oral and written expression, the operating tools of management, and the development of personal effectiveness. The employer attached primary importance to the possession of desirable traits of personality and