

IN the Twenty-eighth Post-Card Examination, which had for its subject, "What are Rubefacients?" Miss M. Falcon, the successful candidate, has chosen for her prize the following books: "Lectures to Nurses on Antiseptics in Surgery," by E. Stanmore Bishop; Longfellow's "Maidenhood"; and "French Phrases of Daily Use," by Julien.

I AM asked to state that if those who have already sent in caps for the Special Prize Competition wish them to be returned, they must forward an application to that effect, together with stamps to cover the cost of postage. All caps not claimed within fourteen days from this date will be otherwise disposed of.

THE last issued quarterly return of the Registrar-General reports that the mean annual rate of mortality in England and Wales during the ten years 1881-90 was 19.2 per 1,000, as against 21.4 per 1,000, for the ten years from 1871-80, and 22.5 per 1,000 from 1861-70. This decline in the death rate of over 10 per cent. has taken place in spite of the fact that people are crowding more than ever into our larger towns, and that the influx of foreigners of the poorest and lowest class into our seaports is certainly not decreasing. Undoubtedly, therefore, much of the decrease in our mortality is due to the fact that sanitary science and hygiene are now beginning to be more generally understood and practised, as well as enforced by more stringent laws. Ever since the fire of London showed us the best way of stamping out a plague, England has been as slow as the rest of the world to learn the lesson that sound drainage, good water, fresh air, and common sense will eradicate many a disease believed in old days to be due to the "Visitation of God," and not to man's ignorance, carelessness, and dirt. But everywhere, now, the attempt to deal with disease and premature death by grasping at the root of the wrong is gaining ground. Much discussion, for instance, took place lately at the Congrès de l'Association Pyrénéenne, respecting the prevalence of goitre and cretinism in France, which were said to have increased alarmingly—over 420,000 persons, it was stated, being afflicted with the former disease. The measures suggested are sweeping and costly reforms: the soil of the districts where goitre is endemic is to be drained, and filtered water to be supplied to the inhabitants; goitrous mothers are not to be allowed to suckle their babies, which should be given (at the expense of the State if necessary) to Nurses living in healthy parts of the country; old ships are to be converted into floating hospitals for the cretins. All these precautions

are recommended as absolutely necessary if these terrible maladies are to be checked and stamped out. Nothing short of a radical cure will satisfy people any longer. As a brigade—and not an unimportant one in the army of sanitation and healing, Nurses should not forget that they have a direct interest in the battle that is being waged everywhere on behalf of health and knowledge, against ignorance and disease.

ONE of our esteemed subscribers asks why we never quote realistic American journalism. I, therefore, cull these items from a *medical* contemporary as evidence of realism:—

"The water-melon and cucumber are getting in their best licks this month, and the average Doctor is consequently as happy as his bill is long."

"Of all the mean, low-lived expressions is that of calling a corpse a 'stiff.' It sounds so inhuman when applied to the dead. Found a 'stiff,' or stealing a 'stiff' does sound outrageous, and intelligent, refined people ought to frown it down."—*Goshen Democrat*. "It might be generally supposed that the word belongs to the vocabulary of undertakers, but such is not the fact. We doubt if there is any class of people who use the term "stiff" as little as undertakers. Coming into the presence of death at a time when the circumstances and surroundings are of the saddest nature, undertakers are most thoroughly impressed with respect for the dead, and very seldom resort to light expressions when referring to them. The word belongs to the category of medical students, who generally use it trippingly on the least provocation."—*Western Undertaker*. We fear *The Undertaker* associates with the wrong class of students, and that wickedness in the great centre of Chicago extends even unto the sacred portals of the medical college. S. G.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOME HOSPITALS ORGANISATION.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—I am glad to see that you have at last opened the columns of your valuable paper to a correspondent concerning Nursing Homes; it is high time a little daylight was let into these establishments. It is now more than a year since I was an inmate as a patient in one of these so-called "Homes," and I have often since desired an opportunity of making public my experiences for the sake of fellow sufferers.

One sad morning I was told by my family Physician that I was suffering with malignant

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