

Annotations.

INSTRUCTION IN HOME NURSING.

It is with deep regret that we observe that the London School Board is sanctioning a scheme for instruction in nursing, by means of evening continuation classes which in its nature must be unsatisfactory and useless.

We have before commented on the plan adopted, but were hopeful that no permanency could be given to so ill-considered a scheme.

Classes for the Board's teachers have been arranged, and they have been lectured to upon such subjects as the prevention of diseases in school life, the prevention of communicable diseases, the eradication of parasitic diseases, the dangers of ophthalmia, the evils of overcrowding and improper dietary, and the dangers of the indiscriminate use of alcohol. We do not doubt that the knowledge gained by attendance at such lectures is useful, we are only concerned to point out that the successful passing of an examination held at the close of these lectures, and the subsequent award of a certificate, do not qualify the possessor of the latter to lecture on nursing.

Nursing can only be learnt by a prolonged course of practical work in attendance on the sick, together with systematic clinical and other instruction in the theory and practice of nursing from qualified teachers, and not by attending a short course of lectures. The London School Board is inaugurating a new danger in regard to nursing by launching its teachers provided with "a special teacher's certificate in home nursing," as instructors in nursing. The magnitude to which such an evil can grow may be estimated by the fact that no less than 1,030 teachers entered for the Board's examination this session, and 894 gained certificates.

The Board's scheme provides that the ambulance course shall consist of twelve meetings, six conducted by a qualified medical practitioner, and six by one of the Board's teachers. The latter are to "assist the doctor, and on each alternate evening, in the doctor's absence, to conduct the class! The nursing classes on the other hand may be conducted by a trained nurse, or a medical man, or by one of the Board's teachers. Medical men take means to protect themselves and the public from the dangers attendant upon unqualified practice. Is it not time that nurses began in earnest to effect a similar protection for their own pro-

fession by means of State Registration when the promulgation of such schemes as the above is possible? What is to hinder these "teachers of nursing" from practising as trained nurses?

THE EXTERMINATION OF MALARIA.

Major Ronald Ross, who is leaving England for the West Coast of Africa on the fifth expedition equipped and sent out by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, has already done valuable work in investigating the cause of malaria. The object of the present expedition is to determine, without a doubt, the theory of the propagation of malaria by means of the bite of the anopheles mosquito, and to demonstrate that recent discoveries may be applied in a practical way to the extermination of the disease. The principal facts already ascertained are, firstly, that the anopheles mosquito propagates itself under easily ascertainable conditions, and lays its eggs in pools where the larvae when hatched can feed on the minute organisms of stagnant water; and, secondly, that it is incapable of flight over great distances; thirdly, that the partially developed germs of disease existing in the blood of a patient suffering from malaria, find, in the stomach of the anopheles mosquito, an environment suitable to their full development, and come in it to full maturity. They then throw off spores, which—exuded in the lance of the mosquito when it bites a healthy person—inoculate him with the malarial poison.

The obvious remedy for the extirpation of malaria then is to destroy the breeding places of the anopheles. Wire-proof houses and similar protections can at best be only palliative measures, dealing with symptoms rather than attacking the root of the disease. Wire screens serve to keep the full grown mosquito out of houses. The scientific procedure is, undoubtedly, to destroy him before he comes to maturity. Therefore, effective drainage appears to be the end to be achieved. Meanwhile, another palliative measure which merits attention is the liberal use of the castor oil plant in the decoration of houses which are infected by the anopheles. It is said that beneath the leaves of the ricinus is a poison fatal to the mosquito, though imperceptible to human beings, and that mosquitoes will neither remain about premises where castor oil trees are planted, nor in rooms where the cut branches, leaves, and seeds have been exposed.

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