

tube, dissolves with a faint blue colour; if a little more copper sulphate be added the mixture becomes violet and then blue.

The non-nitrogenous group consists of—

I. Fats, the chief of which are butter, animal fats and oils, and vegetable oils, such as those derived from the olive, almond, rape-seed, &c.; this group is necessary on account of its "mechanical properties, namely, non-conduction of heat, lubrication, and soft elastic pressure."—(Whiteley).

II. Carbo-hydrates, or starches and sugars. The former are chiefly found in the cereals and farinaceous preparations, such as sago. Tubers, as the potato, are rich in starch, and so are many foreign roots, as arrowroot. The pith of some palms, of which sago is an example, also contains a high percentage of starch.

Starch shows a blue colour when treated with dilute iodine.

Sugar is found in the juice of the sugar-cane, and in the majority of roots grown and eaten in England, such as beet, carrots, turnips, &c. It is also present in the blanched vegetables, as celery, and in the stalks of cabbages.

The carbo-hydrates are the most easily assimilated of all the groups.

Fruits contain much sugar and water, together with certain acids, flavourings, and vegetable gelatin.

Green vegetables are useful for their salts, and also for their mechanical property, in that their insoluble cellulose irritates, and so stimulates, the intestinal walls; the nutritive power of this group, of which the cabbage tribe is an example, is very small.

Common salt is the only mineral taken in its natural condition.

The various groups are also found combined in a single natural article of food, as in milk, or the egg; these are both perfect foods, because they contain all the elements in the proper portion to sustain life.

Almost all food-stuffs contain more than one element, but the proportion varies very much in different examples. Thus, roast meat should contain 28 per cent. proteids, 15 per cent. fats, 3 per cent. salts, and 55 per cent. water. New milk should contain 4 per cent. proteids, 3.5 per cent. fats, 5 per cent. carbo-hydrates, 0.5 per cent. salts, and 87 per cent. water. Rice, 5 per cent. proteids, 0.8 per cent. fats, 83 per cent. carbo-hydrates, 0.5 per cent. salts, 10 per cent. water (Parke's table).

Last week Dr. Norman Aldridge examined the probationers at the Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital who had attended his lectures, and those of the Matron, on medical nursing. Twelve probationers were examined, and all passed. Nurse Lees headed the list with a total of eighty marks, and Nurse Maundrell was a good second with a total of seventy-nine marks.

Life's Little Worries: A Gossip.

Of course that means my little worries, and I am a Matron. Now, I am not going to grumble about my big troubles; there is an old proverb—and old proverbs have a wonderful knack of being shrewd and straight and true—that enjoins you "not to wash your dirty linen in public," but I want to grumble about the little petty everyday trifles, the pin-pricks that are perpetually disturbing your peace. This very article, for instance. The Fates have ordained that my Assistant Matron should be away, that we should be exceptionally busy, and that every time I settled down to write I should be urgently required elsewhere. So I have not been able to write the studious and carefully-thought-out essay I had intended, and only find myself capable of gossiping to my fellow-Matrons and relieving my mind on paper.

There are the domestic worries, and their name is legion. The cold feeling down your spine when Night Sister comes to your bedroom in the early grey of the morning to say that "Cook has not been feeling well all night, and cannot possibly get up," and you know the new kitchenmaid will never be able to tackle the dinners.

The hopeless resignation with which you hear that the water is frozen in the main; the whirlwind advent of the Sister with a burst pipe in her bathroom, which rapidly threatens to swamp the ward; the Sister who comes with the Job-like news that her ward-maid has sprained her wrist badly, and "who is to do the grates, please?"; the laundry superintendent who lands in your office to report that the woman who works the washing machines is too ill to come; the Assistant Matron who arrives to let you know that Minnie Brown has broken six cups, three saucers, five plates, and two feeders—in one noble cataclysm—are familiar to us all. It is also not exhilarating to be told at 10 p.m. that all the evening milk has gone sour, and no amount of telephoning will rouse your milkman; there is also a nice little trouble in the personal grievance of the Sister who has prepared her ward for the sweep who never turned up; whilst the wiles of the average hall and telephone boy are enough to turn many heads grey.

Easily dealt with because the waste-paper basket is always handy, but none the less annoying, is the anonymous letter nuisance. You try to forget it, but it worries and upsets you for the day, and you cannot help wondering whether there is any truth in its startling statements. A fine old irritation is also raised in you when, during harvest thanksgiving month, you find that all the hampers and sacks from Dingley Dell have been sent back to Puddleton, and *vice versa*, and the letters of inquiry begin to come in.

Then there is the commercial traveller worry. You have just settled to your tea, when you are

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)