

dusting and sweeping, scrubbing, &c. Special attention will be devoted to marketing.

Laboratory work with a microscope, chemistry, anatomy and hygiene will also come in this preparatory year. English and vocal and physical culture will receive attention. After all these preliminaries will come "surface nursing," by which is meant bathing and dressing the sick and care of the bed. This will be the first direct practical work the prospective nurse will undertake.

No doubt our superintendents who have proved themselves devoted to furthering the interests of nursing and nurses will again come forward; if Harvard has not put forth a perfect scheme right away our superintendents are the women to help them to improve it. Professional not personal interests have always been the keynote of their conduct.

ONE WHO IS PROUD OF THEM.

THE FORMATION OF MENTAL HABITS.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—Once again my gratitude, and that, doubtless, of many more, has been called forth by another of Miss Loane's helpful papers, the subject this time being "The formation of mental habits."

As an outcome of a train of thought, stimulated by and running parallel with those in Miss Loane's article, may I emphasise a truth which we must all have remarked, namely, the ease with which a habit becomes part of ourselves. "The formation of mental habits" I take to be one department of self-control. I do not know whether my view of things is pessimistic, but I see all around me to-day, that which strikes me as a woeful lack of attention paid to self in the directions of self-respect and self-control. At the same time, the older I grow and the more I profit by reflection and experience, the more certain do I become of the necessity for definitely cultivating those mental and moral habits which constitute self-control.

To this end I am convinced that the acquirement of right habits of thought is of primary importance. We are told that a nerve stimulus in any given direction is transmitted each succeeding time with greater ease, and I believe there is an analogous law in the region of morals. Therefore, we must always be on the watch lest our thoughts unconsciously stray ever so short a way along forbidden or undesirable paths.

There are times when each one of us is less master of himself than at others, by reason, maybe, of physical indisposition, great temptation, overwhelming emotion, or weakened mental conditions.

Then, as in the well-known experiment of the decapitated frog on an inclined plane, the only way of preserving equilibrium—a moral equilibrium in our case—will be by means of reflex action. If we have been careful to set up a healthy condition of reflexes by allowing no loose, unguarded, morbid wandering of our thoughts, we stand a chance of acting as we should wish to were we in full command of our thoughts and actions.

To illustrate my meaning. I have heard young people jokingly discuss various methods of putting an end to their own life, and such a remark as "Oh, I had rather commit suicide," spoken lightly, in an off-hand way. We cannot trace the ultimate result of this; but it is possible that actual suicide, committed at a time of unprepared-for stress, may be only the culmination of a gradual familiarising one's-self with

the thought of the crime, begun in the first instance in a thoughtless and apparently harmless way.

I do not pretend to suggest a new idea, but I am of opinion that its truth cannot be too strongly brought home to all.

Yours faithfully,

Leamington Spa.

A. S. WACKRILL.

DISTRICT NURSES' HOLIDAYS.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—It seems almost impossible to believe that a subscriber should propose, in lieu of the use of holiday nurses in the districts at Leeds, that the homes should be closed, and the sick poor entirely deprived of nursing care. Surely the only solution of the difficulty stated by the Superintendent is to employ a larger staff of nurses, or, if funds are not forthcoming, to continue the holiday staff. The latter may not be perfect, but, if experienced nurses, they must be of far more use to the sick poor than no nurse at all. Leeds is a very wealthy town; surely the cry of its sick poor is sufficiently sad to arouse its sympathy and munificence.

Yours,

A DISTRICT NURSE.

Comments and Replies.

Certificated Nurse.—It would be well for you to acquaint yourself with the position of nursing in New Zealand before you proceed there in the hope of obtaining work. Nurses in that country already have legal status, and you must be prepared with credentials, and apply for registration if you wish for recognition by the nursing world there. Midwives are, so far, not registered, but a Bill dealing with such registration has now passed the House of Representatives, and there is every prospect of its becoming law shortly.

Hospital Matron.—We are in favour of small wards in a Maternity Hospital—*i.e.*, wards containing not more than two beds. These can open on to a corridor, passing along which the nurse can keep all under observation. The advantages of this plan are as follows:—(1) The patient need not be moved after confinement, as the second bed in the ward can always be filled subsequently by a convalescent patient. (2) Anxiety as to other patients is reduced to a minimum in the event of one developing a high temperature before the cause is known. (3) Each ward can be thoroughly disinfected and cleaned before the admission of a new patient. (4) Greater quiet is secured than is possible when many patients are nursed in the same ward, and quiet surroundings are important to patients of this class.

Practical Person.—For cleaning brass ware, lemon-juice and sand are hard to beat. It is employed largely by the natives in countries where brass vessels are made and used, and they shine like gold in a manner undreamt of by most people in this country. Failing the ordinary brass polishes, which are somewhat more economical, we should advise you to try this method.

Notices.

OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page viii.

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