

this difficulty in addition to their very heavy duties of school teaching.

Perhaps the most important part of a school nurse's work will lie in her attempts to influence home conditions. To the careful student of school medical inspection the results of the work performed by school doctors put us face to face with one essential fact—*i.e.*, that school medical inspection throws us back upon the condition of the home. As the child spends about two-thirds of his time at home and only about one-third at school and on his way, this influencing of home conditions will give play to the best instincts of our school nurses. It is a task which will require not only insight, strength of will, and inborn sympathy, but also a considerable amount of tact, tolerance, and patience. It is no easy matter to make ignorant but well-meaning parents understand that if their children go to school unwashed, verminous, ragged, with insufficient sleep and care, the home is to some extent responsible—not, of course, entirely, because there are other social factors which are also responsible. This is clearly proved by the experience of foreign countries, where children from homes of parents with longer working hours and lower wages, go to school, comparatively speaking, in an all-round better condition. The school nurse has so far encountered much opposition in her task of dealing with parents and home conditions, but gradually her kindly sympathy and persistence are wearing down all objections, and in many poor streets her coming is hailed to-day as that of an angel of mercy.

THE NURSE IN THE OPEN-AIR SCHOOL.

The duties of the nurse in the open-air school will be still more extensive than in the ordinary school, as she is in charge of a comparatively small number of children, and is with them, not for a few hours, but for the whole day and for a period of six or more months. She has, moreover, to do with children who have all been selected because of the delicate and sickly state of their health. In addition, therefore, to the duties outlined under the previous headings, the following additional sections of her work may be mentioned in detail:—

(a) The taking of very careful and frequent records of the children's health; so, for example, the weight must be measured every fortnight, the height every month, and the general state of each child's health very carefully noted and observed. In connection with this the nurse would probably be brought much more frequently into contact with the parents than in the ordinary school. It is also probable that many children may need slight surgical

treatment for adenoids, abscesses, or decayed teeth, and so forth. Such children must be very carefully looked after for some time after they have been operated upon, as their general state of health is generally set back for some time.

(b) Paying great attention to the regular bathing of open-air school children. Such baths, both slipper and shower baths, ought to be given at least twice a week to each child, and as bathing delicate children with hot and cold water must be carried out very carefully, owing to the great stimulus imparted to the system, this operation should take place under the constant supervision of the nurse in charge.

(c) A careful watch must be kept by the nurse on the weaker children who take part in the play or manual work of the open-air school. Experience has shown that unless supervision is exercised, many very weak and excitable children are apt to overstrain themselves and retard their recovery by too eager participation in games and manual work. This applies more especially to children with a "heart."

(d) It will be necessary to allow the open-air school nurse to advise largely in the purchase and cooking of food. This is very important if the feeding of children in open-air schools is to be conducted in a thorough and scientific manner. Therefore, the greatest care must be exercised in the buying of food, in the manner of its cooking, and in seeing that all the necessary food constituents are present in proper proportions suitable to the requirements of young and older children.

(e) The supervision during meal time should be principally, but not wholly, in the nurse's hands. She will see that the tables are laid properly by the children, that the food is properly cooked and served, and that the children receive the requisite quantities of food and consume it in a proper manner. Generally, she will endeavour to impress upon the children, not only the necessity of slow eating and perfect mastication, but will also try to teach the children something about the aesthetics of eating and the great communal idea of breaking bread in company with one's fellows.

THE NURSE IN THE RESIDENTIAL OPEN-AIR SCHOOL.

A few words may be said here about the necessity of establishing residential open-air schools. The establishment of day open-air schools in London, for example, is a matter of extreme difficulty, because of the lack of suitable spaces. Owing to the Parks Acts, nothing can be done in parks, commons, and open spaces. School playgrounds cannot be utilised, and there are very few empty private houses available with gardens suitable for open-air

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