

## Nursing Echoes.



We have been asked our opinion on the system of offering prizes for competition in connection with a given subject, and of publishing neither the names nor the addresses of the winners when the result of the competition is announced. We think there can be only one opinion as to this method, namely, that it is both unsatisfactory and undesirable. It is quite competent to anyone to assume that the competition is fictitious, and that the prizes are not awarded at all. In all the years we have edited this journal we have never found a prize-winner object to the publication of her name and address. Such a rule should be made compulsory upon all newspaper proprietors.

School nurses are not concerned with London County Council politics, because as servants of the Council it is their duty to work loyally under it, whichever party is in power. What does concern them is that they shall do as much as possible for those children in the schools who need their trained care. Before powers were given to local authorities under the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, in connection with the provision of food, medical inspection, and medical treatment, in the schools, many of the children must have been working under conditions which quite unfitted them for serious study. Cuts and sores, inflamed glands and tonsils, defective eyesight, discharges from the ears, skin diseases, and uncleanness, are some of the more common conditions brought to light under the present system. Further, Dr. Marion Hunter, reporting on the condition of the teeth of infants at the time of their admission to school, gave some startling instances of the extent of dental caries in six infants, with the exception of two all being under five years of age. Of these a boy just over five had not one tooth, merely offensive stumps; a girl, five years and two months old, had only two teeth left; the other children, all under five, had respectively seven teeth out and five stumps remaining, eleven stumps, fourteen stumps, and seventeen stumps. Periodical inspection of the teeth, as practised in many foreign cities, appears to be the only method of dealing effectively with this national evil, but nurses can do good service by drawing attention to any cases of dental caries which come under their notice, and securing treatment for the children.

We learn that in some of the County Hospitals in the provinces pressure is being put upon the Matrons to open the wards at certain hours to the women who are being organised for Red Cross work in connection with the British Red Cross Society, in order that they may gain some practical experience in nursing, and that it is difficult for the Matrons to make a stand when Boards of Management and local social magnates press the point. Nevertheless, it is a manifest duty to safeguard the interests of the sick in our hospitals as well as of the sick sailors and soldiers in time of war, and that the undesirability of such a course should be emphasised. The sphere of Red Cross workers should be well defined, and restricted to rendering first aid, which can well be learnt outside the wards of a hospital. Skilled nursing is serious work only to be learnt by prolonged study and practical experience, and any attempt to teach nursing by a few hours' insight into ward work can only result in increasing the army of amateur nurses, and should therefore be discouraged.

As a result of the crowded meeting of nurses recently held at Edgbaston, near Birmingham, 22 new members have been added to the Nurses' National Total Abstinence League. A nurse's example and teaching must naturally carry great influence in the war against intemperance.

We are glad to hear that the Brighton, Hove and Preston branch of the Queen's Nurses' Institute is to benefit by the handsome sum of £300 7s. 3d. from the matinée arranged by Mrs. William James, and which was attended by the King. A cheque worth having!

Sir George White in his comprehensive review of the year's work at the annual meeting at Bristol Royal Infirmary, turning to the subject of nursing, said: "I should like to remind you that the Royal Infirmary Preliminary Training School has now been established for rather more than a year, and has proved of the greatest benefit! The careful training which the probationers receive at the school is of the greatest value, and no pains are spared to raise the standard of work throughout their training. There is every inducement for the best class of probationers to come here because the Bristol Royal Infirmary contains special departments for various kinds of cases not always received in general infirmaries and hospitals, and our nurses have also the privilege of learning midwifery and massage, whilst the Institution is one of the schools recognised by the Central Midwives' Board. Our nursing staff, including

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