

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE OBSERVED IN NURSING A CASE OF ENTERIC FEVER, TO PREVENT INFECTION?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Jessie M. Stevens, a member of the private nursing staff of the Royal Infirmary, Bristol, for the following article on the above question:—

The two great principles which underlie all precautions for the prevention of infection from Enteric Fever, are:—

1. Scrupulous Cleanliness.
2. Thorough Disinfection.

The nurse attending a case of Enteric Fever must not think only of warding off infection from herself, but also from all those in the same house or ward in which the patient is being nursed. The great danger of infection lies in contamination from the stools and urine—these teem with typhoid germs—also, in a lesser degree, from the patient's breath.

Absolute cleanliness is essential. The patient must be sponged and washed frequently and thoroughly, apart from the value of such treatment in reducing a high bodily temperature.

Linen must be changed as soon as soiled, as any soil which is allowed to dry on the sheets, etc., is a most fertile source of infection.

The mouth also needs constant attention, the tongue and teeth being cleansed, and all sordes removed, before and after each feed is given.

Should the nurse soil her apron, sleeves, or dress, while attending to the patient, she must change at once, and disinfect the soiled article before sending to the laundry.

A bowl of Lysol (1-200) or Perchloride of Mercury (1-1,000) should stand near the patient's bed, and every person who touches him should soak the hands in it for three minutes, afterwards washing with soap and water. Soapy hands plunged into Perchloride of Mercury neutralise its antiseptic properties. It is also useless for disinfecting urine which contains albumen. All stools and urine must be disinfected before being thrown away.

Any specimens kept for inspection should be covered with a piece of gauze, lint, or old linen wrung out of the disinfectant, and a glass, or other fitting cover, placed on the top.

All crockery and utensils must be marked and kept for the patient's use only, and never washed up with things used by others.

All instruments, *i.e.*, catheter, forceps, thermometer, must be boiled or disinfected immediately after use.

All linen, including tea-towels and lavatory-cloths, must be soaked in disinfectant for 24 hours before being washed.

If there is a special typhoid tank, linen should be carried to it from the bedside in a special pail, with the cover on, never in the nurses' hands.

All cleansing material, wool, tow, etc., should be burnt at once.

Mops, kept for cleansing bed-pans and urinals, and the brushes for the spouts of feeders, should be kept standing in disinfectant.

Finally, when the temperature has subsided, and the patient is pronounced convalescent, he should receive a carbolic bath, and be removed to another bed; and, if in a private house, to another room, so that the previous one can be fumigated.

The mattress and pillows must be stoved, and the bedstead washed with disinfectant.

It is a good plan to have blankets stoved also, before washing, as soaking in Izal or carbolic lotion hardens the texture, and spoils their colour.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Miss E. Yates, Miss E. Marshall, Miss A. Phipps, Miss M. Heeney (London), Miss Simpson (Bridlington), Miss E. M. Pickard (Llangollen), Miss H. Laurence (Edinburgh), and Miss M. V. Winters (Leicester) receive honourable mention.

Miss H. Laurence mentions that relatives should be kept from kissing the patient, or otherwise running any risk by breathing too near him. At the same time the patient's mouth should be kept clean by being regularly swabbed out.

Miss E. Yates says that all articles, including thermometer, cups, feeders, bed-pans, urinals, etc., should be of some definite ware, or specially marked, and kept exclusively for the patient's use.

Miss E. M. Pickard draws attention to the point that there should only be in the sick room what is absolutely necessary, no curtains, bed hangings or carpet, and that the floor should be washed daily with carbolic lotion or lysol.

Miss Simpson observes that the nurse should never go to a case fasting. She should never take food in the sick room, or allow any one else to do so, and she should never take or touch food without washing her hands, or take it without washing her face as well.

Miss N. Heeney says that the safest method, when practicable, is to burn the evacuations. Miss Emily Marshall makes the same remark about dressings, wool, etc., and is the only competitor who has mentioned that rubber

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