

important to prevent the hands from becoming hard and roughened. Most patients are very sensitive to the touch of a nurse's hand, and to a refined, fastidious man or woman it must be extremely unpleasant to be handled by a woman whose hands are the reverse of smooth and comforting.

The hand, in fact, has such a power for good if carefully treated and wisely preserved from injury, that it is not beneath the dignity of a nurse to bestow some amount of care and attention on such an important member of the body, both for her own sake and for the sake of present and future patients.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors are accorded honourable mention:—Miss E. Dymes, Miss G. Tatham, Miss V. Barwise, Miss E. Marshall, Miss J. Stone, Miss B. O'Brien, and Miss Bielby.

Miss E. Marshall writes that a plump, soft, pliable hand is the most suitable for nurses to possess. There is such a difference in the touch, and a patient knows at once the kind of hand which is pleasant to feel and touch, a hand which is gentle and soothing. A patient once remarked, "Nurse, your finger-tips actually see."

Apart from those who are fortunate enough to possess the true nurse's hand, it is necessary to know exactly how to care for and protect both others as well as oneself from infection. . . . Nurses must always be particular to use forceps for removing soiled dressings, and rubber gloves for rubbing in mercurial and other dangerous absorbent drugs.

Miss E. Dymes states that to keep one's hands in the best condition for use in the sick room requires some care and trouble on the part of the nurse. But it is time and trouble well spent. She has found Friar's Balsam heal cracks better than anything else, but she truly says that "everyone has her own pet preparation."

Miss Gladys Tatham writes that unfortunately the amount of hard work in the nature of scrubbing, dusting, and general cleaning expected of a nurse in our hospitals and infirmaries makes it very difficult for her to keep her hands in good condition. She has not time to be always repairing the ravages of char-work, and in consequence the hands are very liable to become red and chapped.

Miss Tatham further says: "Gloves ought always to be worn in the street, to avoid unnecessary germs clinging to the skin." This opens rather a wide question. What about the inside of the gloves, and the condition of the hands when the gloves are put on? Unless the

hands are absolutely clean when gloves are worn, they may be far from a protection from germs the next time they are donned. The gloves as well as the hands should be above suspicion, and, to be logical, only gloves which can be frequently washed should be worn.

Miss Bielby points out that the human hand is perhaps the most wonderful of all the instruments used in the world's work. Its functions are manifold, and cover the whole gamut of human experience and emotion. From the moment when the tiny fingers of the newborn cling to the mother's breast to the time when they are meekly and pathetically folded on the breast of the sleeper in the last long earthly sleep, the hands are intimately associated with all one's memories and affections. As the transmitters of healing and sympathy they find their highest functions in the exponents of trained nursing, and, as with all other instruments, the greatest efficiency is here attained by the most careful preservation.

Miss V. Barwise puts in a plea for equal attention to the feet. While the importance of care for the hands cannot be over-rated, the feet do not always receive their rightful share of attention. Yet they well repay it, and, after all, a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and if a nurse's feet fail her she may possess all the skill in the world, and her hands may be perfect for tending the sick, but all this skill and perfection are useless if her feet will not carry her efficiently about her work.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What form of infection is likely to follow the retention of a piece of the placenta after delivery, and what are its characteristics?

THE LEAGUE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL NURSES.

A General Meeting and Social Gathering of the League will be held at St. Bartholomew's Hospital on Saturday, November 30th. The President, Miss Cox-Davies, will be in the chair.

The League has arranged for three very interesting Lectures to be given in the spring. 1. "Eugenics: What it is," by Mr. Bishop Harman, F.R.C.S.; 2, "The Industrial Position of Women," by Miss Constance Smith; and 3. "Some Aspects of Juvenile Labour," by Miss O. I. Dunlop, D.Sc. Tickets for the course will be 2s. to members and 4s. to non-members, and may be obtained from Mrs. Andrews, Hon. Sec., 31, Cotterill Road, Surbiton.

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