

## SCHOOL NURSING.\*

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The large number, which constantly increases, of women engaged in looking after the health of children in Elementary Schools makes it necessary we should keep clearly before Nurses what is the training best suited to the work.

I have no hesitation in saying that the best infirmity training makes an excellent foundation, on which should be built special training in infectious diseases, knowledge of Sanitary Inspection and Health Visitor's work; this includes district visiting in the homes of the poor.

I have not mentioned the other types of School Nursing, such as Private Schools and Secondary Schools, because they are simple in contrast to elementary schools—in one case, we have the Head of the School, responsible to the parents for the children's health, and in the second, much more careful parents, and better general health and physique in the children.

In *Elementary Schools* the Nurse's sphere is constantly widening. First, she is started to deal with cuts and bruises and such small accidents; then attention to uncleanliness is added, and schemes for dealing with verminous conditions are devised, and brought into play. Next comes medical inspection, and henceforth the school nurse shares with the doctor in medical inspection, and the treatment arising out of it.

We will illustrate these remarks by a typical day spent in a school by the nurse.

Starting at 9 a.m., when the School opens, she sees all children in attendance to about 300 in the morning, gives out cards to be given to the parents in cases of extra uncleanliness, sending lists of such children to the Nurse who visits from the Cleansing Station and whose business it is to follow up the cases of such children.

The School-Nurse is expected to note any child who is not well, or whose eyesight, or ears, require attention; watch for cases of infectious disease, mal-nutrition or neglect, and report them to the Medical Officer to be dealt with as "special" cases for medical inspection and treatment at either School Treatment Centre or Hospital. These cases are seen by the School-Doctor, and then receive vouchers for treatment from the Care Committees,

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whose business it is to make appointments for them—where there are only small numbers to deal with, the nurse is responsible for these arrangements—and to inform the School Doctor of what has been done for the children.

## RINGWORM.

All cases of ringworm are seen by the Nurse, either at School or at home every month, and a regular report is made as to condition, and if cured, by what means the cure was effected. Wherever the Nurse is in doubt, either in the beginning (as to the disease), or at the end (if cured or not), she has to take stumps for microscopical examination by the doctor, on whose decision the child is either excluded or readmitted to the School. Numbers of such children are now cured by the use of X Rays, but the process is expensive, and so far many cases are still obliged to depend on other methods of cure.

Every case of ringworm has a record card on which the progress of the cases is marked. In connection with this visit of the Nurse's, there is considerable clerical work which requires careful attention.

In London such a visit as this takes a whole day, and all the Nurses have about 9—12 schools, according to the number of children in them; but this visit only represents one half of her work; the next day will be spent in medical inspection; the morning spent in weighing and measuring children, and testing their vision, in preparation for the doctor. During his visit the Nurse sees the children are ready for him, or if the parent is not there, undresses and dresses the children, and keeps a statistical record of each child, which is despatched to headquarters after each inspection.

The following is a list of results from such visits.

1. *Uncleanliness* and *verminous conditions* are dealt with by a series of notifications to the parent, and, if necessary, baths at the *cleansing stations*.

2. *Infectious diseases* are watched for, and if suspected, immediately dealt with, all contracted watched, and excluded from school when necessary.

There is no doubt that a *reduction* has been made in the numbers of children suffering from scarlet fever, measles, chicken-pox, &c.

Ringworm is carefully noted, and treatment insisted upon.

## RESULTS OF MEDICAL INSPECTION.

Cases of—

3. *Minor ailments* are put in touch with Centres where Nurses of local Associations,

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