

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

MENTION SOME NURSING EXPEDIENTS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN USED IN DISTRICT AND SCHOOL NURSING.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Dora Vine, Exmouth.

### PRIZE PAPER.

#### DISTRICT NURSING.

1. *Temporary Expedients.* — Besides the usual newspaper, brown paper, and family crockery, almost anything can be turned to account by a clever nurse. I remember going with a nurse to see a small girl with pneumonia. An old umbrella was cleverly lashed to the small bed in such a way that it made a frame on which an old sheet was hung. Twin babies managed to thrive in an improvised incubator made from a Tate's sugar box, with one side used as the bedstead, and a part of the top retained to make a new side. They lay on a flannel shirt at first, with beer bottles filled with hot—not boiling—water. A kettle was kept on the fire boiling, and a long "spill" of paper directed the steam towards the babies. Salines were given with a small catheter and funnel. My cuffs, one placed over the other and covered with a handkerchief, have made a convenient mask for chloroform. I have known a doctor use the baby's shirts to help make a plug in a case of hæmorrhage.

The oven shelf makes a good substitute for a hot-water bottle, and, when wrapped in a piece of old blanket or flannel, it is an excellent bed for a premature baby.

2. *Contrivances for Chronic Invalids, &c.* — I once saw a rather ingenious sort of pulley arranged by a young carpenter for his mother, who was bedridden. It consisted of a long piece of rope tied round the bottom of the bed so that one end belonged to each corner. A piece of wood made a sort of handle, and by pulling whichever handle she wanted she was able to turn herself. Another man made a clever hammock for his little girl. It was made of sail cloth, two-thirds longer than necessary, the extra piece doubling back, thus making a sort of bag. This hammock was placed outside a little cottage, and was warm and cosy for its possessor. The mother of a phthisical son used up some old sheets in a rather unusual way. She cut them up into squares of about a yard, stitching two together. Then a circle was cut out, big enough to admit the boy's head. This was a good way of arranging the bed linen, as the square covered the pillow and sheet, and, being wrung out in disinfectant and washed separately, showed she had learnt something of the lesson nurse had tried to teach.

Newspapers stitched on each side of a thin blanket will give one a surprising amount of warmth, and will not rustle.

Bed cradles can be made of cardboard by cutting up a handbox, or by using a chair.

Sandbags are valuable aids in many cases, as they can be used instead of hot-water bottles, and when warm are much more comforting than soft pillows for rheumatic joints.

An excellent inhaler is an ordinary jug, with a folded towel arranged for the patient's face.

Old pieces of curtain or muslin may be fastened with drawing-pins to the window frame, so that the window may be kept open without fear of dust or draughts.

#### SCHOOL NURSING.

The cleverest contrivance, I think, I have seen with regard to school nursing is a little carriage that was made for a little lame girl by her father. She had had an accident, and was very sorry to miss getting on at school, so her father turned to the ubiquitous sugar-box, and, with odd wheels and wood, made a very clever little cart.

A school nurse in some places has to arrange her work under unsatisfactory conditions, and only by degrees can she know exactly what to ask the Committee or Board to supply. In any case, where first aid is necessary for some accident, the school furniture can be used. An easel makes a good stretcher; a blackboard will do for a small child. Even the cane—where such a relic exists—might come in handy. For bandages, it is good to remember that many tail bandages can often be made, and will answer the purpose in many cases where rollers cannot be obtained. In all cases, however, an inventive brain and cool head will carry one through.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss B. James, Miss M. Thomson, Miss Elliott, Miss F. Farrer, Miss O'Brien.

Miss M. Thomson writes:—In district maternity work, if a mackintosh is not forthcoming, strong brown paper is a substitute not to be despised, and is practically waterproof. An excellent pulley can be made with ordinary brown calico twice the length required, and doubled. The loop thus formed is passed under the rail at the foot of the bed, the free ends passed through it, and a pulley, strong and soft, of great service to the patient, is the result.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Describe appearance of blood in hæmorrhage from lungs. (a) Define nurse's duties in such an emergency.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)