

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

MENTION THE MOST DELECTABLE DRINKS FOR INVALIDS, AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.

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

PRIZE PAPER.

To take the subject of invalid drink in its simplest form, that is, to know what to give to a patient who is thirsty, and yet restricted to certain quantities and qualities, one must begin with water and ice.

These most ordinary invalid drinks can be made delectable or otherwise by the care and sense of the nurse. For instance, a patient who is suffering from thirst after an operation, and is only allowed an ounce of albumen water, or sips of water, will feel as thirsty as before, and mentally sore, if his drink is given him in an ordinary tumbler—whereas, if it is brought up on a tray with a dainty doyley, in a wine glass or liqueur glass, he gets the subconscious impression of having something tangible—a great relief from his thirst, and he will empty his tiny glass and perhaps sleep. So with ice. It should be daintily served, and if the doctor allows it, just a squeeze of lemon will make a pleasing change. To proceed to more convalescent stages:—

Imperial Drink is a general favourite with hospital and private patients. It is simply and quickly made with the following ingredients: Cream of tartar, 1 teaspoonful; lemon juice, 1 teaspoonful; castor sugar, 1 heaped teaspoon, or to taste; water, to 1 pint.

Here the nurse's personality can make all the difference to her patient. She should find out whether he likes a sweet concoction, or "something with a nip." When eggs and milk must be taken in appreciable quantities, nurse again has scope for originality. I remember having charge of a ward for tuberculosis patients. All were on eggs and milk, and had got tired of the usual "egg flip" and other hospital ways of administering the milk and eggs they had got to dislike. I thought one day of "pooling" the eggs—that is—I separated all the whites and the yolks, beat the whites to "snow" with a whisk, then boiled the milk, stirred in the yolks, and filled up each glass, adding to each a share of the "snow" with a little castor sugar on the top. The men enjoyed this, and I soon got to discover ways of varying this method, flavouring with cocoa, coffee (brandy in special cases). The nurse with an original mind will soon find plenty of variations!

Albumen water is made by adding the white of one egg to half a pint of water, or as much as is ordered in any particular case. The white of the egg must be cut with a sharp knife—not beaten in the ordinary way. Albumen water is a tasteless drink, but is still welcomed by the thirsty sufferer if daintily served.

Milk and Lime Water (a tablespoonful of lime water to a tumbler of milk) is also more welcome than delectable to a thirsty one.

Milk can be made palatable if only care is taken. Most patients begin by saying they cannot touch milk, but with care they can be induced to take it and like it. Here again the nurse should consult individual taste as far as possible. Does the patient like a hot or cold drink? Sweet or not? Naturally a glass of cold milk is not welcome to one who likes to drink it really hot and well sweetened. Here again vanilla, a bay leaf, an egg, nutmeg, cinnamon, a small piece of chocolate, a taste of good coffee, will make even a confirmed milk hater change his mind. Milk must be served carefully, however—in a glass for preference—and just the amount the patient may take should be brought in. A glass of milk to be given as a soporific at night should be given even more care. The glass should be warmed, the milk must boil, and it must be given just at the psychological moment, when the patient is in bed and ready for sleep.

Bovril, Oxo, and Lemco can be given hot or cold. The addition of soda water is a change. Lemonade with a little ginger is also welcome to some folk.

Black currant tea (jam in hot water) is a godsend, hot or cold, to patients suffering from cold and sore throat. *Cold*, it is an excellent thing to sip during the night.

A tasty "Cold Preventive" can be made by adding a teaspoonful (or more) of honey to a tumbler of boiling milk. It does not taste as sickly as it sounds, and is really an excellent "night cap."

Really delectable drinks can be described *ad infinitum*, but I think as much depends on the serving and surroundings as the drink itself!

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss M. M. G. Bielby, Miss E. M. Streeter, Miss F. Sheppard, Miss J. G. Gilchrist, Miss M. Robinson, Miss McCarthy, Miss B. James, Miss H. M. Springbett, Miss D. Maton.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What precautions would you take in the care of an enteric patient to protect yourself and others from infection?

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