

their proper uses; they should be kept covered, and aseptic, so that, after a dressing, any left over may be used up; any that has been exposed by accident may be used after thorough sterilisation. In the same way, if necessary, old linen and bandages may be used after sterilisation.

Again, gas, coal, water, ward stores, such as soap, &c., should be used with economy: ward furniture, and all domestic articles, such as brooms, brushes, &c., should be taken care of, and thus made to last as long as possible.

With regard to crockery, both in ward and ward kitchen, much may be effected by the use of good enamel ware, once the initial expense has been met. The ward linen also will call for good supervision: articles should be sent for repair as soon as necessary.

The laundry also should be economised as far as possible, without interfering with cleanliness. The whole avoidance of waste really depends upon whether or no there exists an intelligent system of economy in the ward, and upon the Sister's vigilance in seeing that her system is carried out in every detail. All should be instructed in keeping everything to its own use, as far as possible.

The "offices" scarcely come within the nurse's scope, though here, in many ways, a great saving can be effected, no doubt, by the exercise of care and experienced business capacity.

In the workrooms, such as linen stores, almost every large article too old for mending may be cut down into smaller ones, such as good parts of sheets for toilet cloths, &c., &c. But this is usually in the hands of those from whom the nurses' code of economy originally comes.

Then, in the nurses' home, the nurses may effect much by ordinary care of furniture, crockery, water, gas, coal, &c.

To sum up, cheap common goods in the way of linen and food are never found to be an economy; rather, the expert buying of things which will give the best value at the smallest outlay. If the staffs of hospitals would all try to carry out an intelligent economic system, it is possible that the fancied economy of small salaries and under-staffing would be less evident.

Lastly, I would add that any who aim at administrative work would do well to read and assimilate the editorial article of our JOURNAL of August 21 of this year, and they should prepare themselves for such important duties, by taking a course of instruction in domestic economy.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss Dora Vine, an excellent paper, but too long for rules of competition; Miss Lucy C. Cooper, Miss Henrietta Ballard, Miss Jane Long, Miss Katie Green, Miss R. Kisley, Miss A. Harding.

Miss Dora Vine writes:—

"In my opinion, an enormous amount could be saved in our hospitals and infirmaries, if the fundamental principles of domestic economy and management were carefully taught, not only to the probationers, but also to the other members of the staff, from the students and doctors to the servants and wardmaids. 'Because they didn't think' is often an answer to charges of extravagance, but 'because they didn't know' is sometimes a truer reply. In a well-regulated hospital, waste can be avoided by *knowledge*. . . . In hospitals supported by voluntary contributions, it must be remembered that all the money represents charity in a very high sense—the love of man for man; so that whether a nurse works under the Poor Law or in a hospital, she is on her honour to practise true economy. To go into details:—A probationer must be taught during her training how the hospital is worked, through the various departments, and I suggest a systematic course of instruction."

Writing of the cleaning of the building, Miss Lucy C. Cooper very pertinently remarks:—  
"It is not the soap rubbed into the brush which constitutes waste, but the piece left to melt at the bottom of the bucket; it is not the Sapollo rubbed on to the taps which is wasted, but the block laid on the wet sink. So also with beeswax, blacklead, and other materials used in cleaning."

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

How would you allay irritation of the skin caused by iodine, mustard plaster, and soap and water enema?

#### THE NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

The National Union of Trained Nurses asks us to announce that it can let at its new office, 46, Marsham Street, Westminster, a good room for meetings, capable of seating eighty people. There is a small platform, gas lighting and heating. The charge is 10s. for a meeting of three hours or less, and 6d. an hour after. Applications should be made to Miss Thurstan, the Secretary, who will be pleased to show the room.

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