

there can be no objection to the moderate use of stimulants.

Hot-water bottles are of great use, both to relieve pain and to combat the cold, collapsed condition."

### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

WHAT IS MEANT BY (a) PUBLIC HYGIENE,  
(b) PERSONAL HYGIENE, (c) MENTAL HYGIENE,  
(d) SANITATION ?]

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Katie O'Sullivan, Nurses' Home, 4, Manor Road, Chatham.

#### PRIZE PAPER.

(a) Public hygiene comprises the various measures that are taken for the preservation of the public health and the prevention and treatment of disease and crime.

These are chiefly:—The notification and isolation of infectious diseases, also vaccination and inoculation; the isolation, control, and care of the certified insane and of convicted criminals; the laws governing the behaviour of persons in public; the public health, medical, nursing, and sanitary services; the treatment of disease; the registration of qualified medical practitioners; the registration of births, deaths, and marriages; the sanitary arrangements of public buildings, such as hospitals, schools, and prisons; the laws relating to factories and work-shops; food and drugs; the prevention of "overcrowding on space" and in buildings; the providing of parks and open spaces in cities and towns; the regulation of traffic, and all precautions taken for the safety of the travelling public; the systems of drainage, sewerage, and pure water supply, fire brigades, &c. Many benevolent societies, such as the N.S.P.C.C. and the Royal Humane Society, may also be included.

(b) Personal hygiene includes general personal cleanliness, the wearing of clothing suitable to weather, occupation, age, and state of health; the taking of sufficient and suitable exercise, rest, food and recreation; general regularity of life, and taking ordinary precautions against disease.

(c) Mental hygiene is a subject that affords more freedom for individual thought, and ought to be well understood by nurses, for ours is a merciful work, and we are, ourselves, dependent on the justice and mercy of others.

The training in mental hygiene begins at an early age, when the infant is trained to habits of order and regularity, and later on, the child, to discipline, truthfulness, and obedience—and above all, charity. Gradually an understanding is gained of the principles of justice and honour.

As education proceeds, the various gifts and graces of mind are developed, and endeavours made to arrest every evil tendency.

While the more practical virtues are being instilled, the affections and emotions should not be forgotten, but encouraged and guided into the proper channels, and self-control taught—a training that will prove useful in the battle of life, for:—

"Love rules the Court, the camp, the grove,  
And men below, and Saints above."

Mental hygiene is the happy possession in greater or less degree of every sane person, and includes general cleanliness of mind, and the proper use of the powers of memory, understanding, and free will. The class of literature habitually read, the topics of conversation usually selected, and the places of amusement visited, play a large part in the formation of habits of mind.

Environment also is an important factor. Higher, nobler, and stronger qualities of mind are often found in great men and women in literature, art, and science. This is necessary for the common good:—

For just experience shows, on every soil,  
That those who think should govern those  
that toil.

Though the training and life of a nurse are conducive to mental hygiene, on the other hand, the absorbing nature of our work, and the lack of opportunity for much general social intercourse, have a tendency to make us self-centred—our patients, our profession, and ourselves looming so large in our horizon as to obscure other matters. Without injury to our work, we could endeavour to look at our own affairs from a more detached standpoint, and cultivate a wider knowledge of the subjects which interest others. By doing so, we would increase our own happiness and that of our friends, and add to the gaiety of nations.

Finally, a hygienic mind may be defined as a cultured mind, though the word "culture" has been somewhat misused.

(d) Sanitation is the application of sanitary science. For example, in the selection of a site and construction of a building, it can be applied to:—Aspect and elevation, influence of surrounding objects, soil, subsoil and drainage; the materials used, the method of construction, preparation of and facilities for a supply of pure water, ventilation, lighting and heating, disposal of sewage and refuse.

The L.C.C. schools may be taken as an example of sanitary science (as it stands at present) applied both to the building and the after working.

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