

and Charles Porter, Esq., M.D., Medical Officer of Health for St. Marylebone District, also spoke.

Votes of thanks were heartily given to the Superintendent and her nurses, the Chairman and speakers, and to Mrs. Edwards for so kindly lending her house for the meeting, at the conclusion of which dainty refreshments were served.

B. K.

### THE MENTAL HYGIENE OF THE SCHOOL CHILD.

The fifth lecture of the course on the Care of the School Child, under the auspices of the National League for Physical Education and Improvement, was given at the London Day Training College on May 31st. The lecturer was F. C. Shrubbsall, Esq., M.D., Assistant Medical Officer L.C.C. His subject was "The Mental Hygiene of the School Child."

The lecturer began by giving a brief outline of the brain and nervous system. Dealing with the speech centres, he traced the first meaningless babble of the infant through progressive stages until speech was fully and intelligently established. He strongly advocated very short periods of work for children in the infant schools, with frequent intervals for rest and sleep, and said that the question of home work was one that required serious consideration. Care committees could do a great deal by finding out the conditions under which children worked at home. He described three classes of children. The unemotional, who never worried, who could not be overworked or overstrained; the unrestrained emotional, who was not likely to suffer much wrong, as it gave way to loud outcry for slight cause; and the restrained emotional, who gave cause for much anxiety. The last class included clever and even brilliant children, but who were often wrecked by means of grievous burdens of worry and anxiety. Work by itself, he said, never harmed anybody, but when it was combined with worry it constituted a danger. Girls more often than boys were of this class, not he thought on account of sexual differences, but because women as a body were more conscientious than men. His advice to workers was to put their work in water-tight compartments and never to take it out at recreation. Girls also, he said, did not have the same physical aid as boys, and he spoke highly of the boy scout movement especially as a preventive to morbid sex consciousness.

In a dull and defective child it was the best thing, if possible, to restore its self respect by developing any gift it might possess. He had known children improve wonderfully after leaving special schools where they had become proficient in some one thing: they were able to triumph over companions who, though not defective, were not able to compete with them in this particular achievement.

The duty of studying the mental hygiene of the child should be impressed on all who have the care of children. Much misunderstanding is thereby avoided.

### ANNUAL SERVICE IN ST. PAUL'S.

It was at a supreme moment that the members of the East London Nursing Society assembled for their annual service in St. Paul's Cathedral on June 6th. The solemn notes of "The Dead March in Saul" were filling the vast building as we stood waiting to be conducted to the Crypt where the service was to be held. Its poignant strains held us enthralled. There, under the very shadow of the Iron Duke's monument, we realised that Lord Kitchener of Khartoum had in his turn passed into the great Unknown.

How naturally came to our minds the words of the Ode to his great predecessor:—

"O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
O fall'n at length that tower of strength,  
That stood four-square to all the winds that blew."

A grey-haired officer near us stood rigid at attention. The wailing notes changed into martial triumph and died away silently and soberly; the little group of nurses dispersed for their own service.

The preacher, the Rev. Hugh B. Chapman, of the Chapel Royal, Savoy, took for his text the passage in Exodus which deals with the bitter waters of Marah being sweetened by the rod of Moses; and he instanced how that a spiritually-minded nurse had it in her power to sweeten the bitter waters of loneliness, pain, sin and death for her patients by teaching them that the Cross of Christ was the alleviation for all human sorrow.

The nurse, he said, could not afford to be an ordinary woman. Whatever happened, she was bound to be wonderful either because she sank below or was lifted by her office on to a higher plane.

He thought the greatest danger was for a nurse to become mechanical and by repetition to lose the divine touch of sympathy. A true nurse should have a certain touch of the saint. At this time, with sorrow on every side, especially should nurses re-dedicate themselves to their high office. "You, my sisters," he said, "have constantly to do with the waters of bitterness. When you are asked 'How in the name of God can I bear it?' unless you are really consecrated you will not be able to give the answer. I pity the nurse who has not got the secret. Those who have work wonders where ever they go."

Referring to the bitterness of loneliness, the preacher said that only the day before he was speaking with an officer who was in the great naval battle, he was experiencing this bitterness, as he had seen his friends blown to bits all round him. All have to drink of this cup whether peer or peasant.

What a divine office to relieve it. O, the beauty of it; surely the most blessed task ever vouchsafed to woman. But if a nurse had not found Jesus she had awfully little to give. Human love goes an awfully little way when it comes to loneliness of soul.

Nurses come in contact with the bitter waters of sin. "I think," he said, "of some of our

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