

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss G. L. Sheppard, Miss E. Dolores Hooker, Miss M. Robinson, Miss T. Jenkins, Miss T. MacAlister, Miss M. E. Thorpe.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Describe how you would care for and feed a premature infant.

ROYAL EDINBURGH MENTAL HOSPITAL.

The Hundred and Fourth Annual Report of the Royal Edinburgh Mental Hospital, Morningside, of which Dr. George M. Robertson, F.R.C.P., is Physician Superintendent, was presented at the Statutory Annual Meeting held within the City Chambers on February 26th, the Right Hon. the Lord Provost in the chair.

Dr. Robertson's report gives an extremely interesting insight into the year's work.

NO INCREASE OF INSANITY.

He states that there is no evidence that there has been any increase of insanity in the civil population last year. The male admissions appear to be much the same, and there is a decided fall in the number of females. Dr. Robertson reports, with regard to males, he had expected a fall from the withdrawal of so many young adults from the civil population, and that it is to be feared that the strain of modern warfare has resulted in much mental derangement among young soldiers, though fortunately often of a recoverable nature, but these cases are being treated in special hospitals by the military authorities. With regard to the number of women admitted, several have broken down owing to the strain and excitement of unaccustomed war work. It would seem reasonable to infer, seeing that there has been a fall, that the effect of war work has been so far on the whole beneficial, and less injurious than the semi-employed and shut-in lives that many women formerly led.

He expected to see many more cases alleged to be due to bereavement, the result of the war. The righteousness of our cause, and the nobility of character displayed by the youth of our country, have, he believes, softened this blow, and the knowledge that the sacrifices made have not been in vain has proved a consolation. The Zeppelin raid was only responsible for the admission of three cases. Spiritualism is also recorded amongst the causes.

SPIRITUALISM: A WARNING.

Dr. Robertson says he feels it to be necessary at this time, as the result of several cases that have come under his care, to utter a note of warning to those who are seeking consolation in their sorrows by practical experiments in the domain of spiritualism. He does not profess to pass any judgment on spiritualism itself, although he has been interested in it for thirty years. He recognizes it is a difficult subject, worthy of patient and unbiassed enquiry by competent investigators. He does not, however, consider that those who are unversed in normal, and particularly in morbid psychology, are qualified investigators, and least of all, that those who are wishing and longing for, and unconsciously expecting certain manifestations from friends they have lost, make reliable observers.

He therefore regards the publication of "Raymond" at this psychological moment as much to be deplored.

He warns those who may possibly inherit a latent tendency to nervous disorders to have nothing to do with practical inquiries of a spiritualistic nature, lest they should awaken this dormant proclivity within their brain.

THE WAR WORK OF THE INSTITUTION.

The staffing of the Institution on the male side was, we read, for many months a more anxious problem than that of supplying accommodation for patients. At an early stage the young attendants enlisted most loyally, and after the Military Service Act came into operation, exemption was asked for very few. Fortunately in peace time there had been developed and perfected a system for the employment of female nurses in some of the male wards, and these methods have been extended, so that now nearly one-half of the staff in charge of the male patients consists of women. Without the help of these methods of female care, it would have been quite impossible in the depleted condition of the staff to have nursed such large numbers of senile, infirm, and hospital cases as have been sent to them.

NEURASTHENIC AND INSANE SOLDIERS.

Referring to the care and treatment of the large numbers of neurasthenic and insane cases that have been dealt with amongst soldiers during the war, Dr. Robertson says that he entirely sympathised with the public desire, which was given effect to, that soldiers who had become insane on active service should receive a good chance of recovering without the necessity of undergoing the legal process of being certified to be insane, which could not

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)