

Associated with the national kitchens it is proposed to organize public restaurants, at which it is expected about twenty-five per cent. of the food cooked will be consumed, and a training scheme is in contemplation in connection with which twelve French and twelve American cooks have been invited to give the department the benefit of their experience. We hope the national dishes from North of the Tweed will also be included in the menu.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

IN WHAT DIRECTIONS DO YOU SUGGEST THAT STEPS MAY BE TAKEN TO REDUCE WASTE TO A MINIMUM IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF A WARD?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Alice M. Burns, East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital, Ipswich.

PRIZE PAPER.

FOOD.

Perhaps food is the first article it is important to economise in these days. In a ward much may be done by noting a patient's appetite. A large portion of food given to one with a precarious appetite not only causes waste, but gives the patient a distaste for his food. If one cannot eat his crusts, these might be cut off beforehand and saved for soup.

FLUIDS.

In making fluid drinks an approximate idea should be gained of the quantity likely to be required. No one likes to give a patient "on fluids" 24-hours old barley water, but that sometimes seems the only alternative to throwing a large jugful away. Of course, a "pig pail" should be kept for all scraps of food unavoidably damaged. Any fit left-overs should be returned to the kitchen.

SURGICAL SUPPLIES.

In a surgical ward the amount of dressings which a particular wound requires may be made a mental note of, so that there be none to throw away when the dressing is completed; this applies also to lotions, though in a less degree.

Triangular bandages are most economical if made of unbleached calico; they will stand much more laundering than the ordinary woven roller.

CLEANING.

Old linen and rags should always be to hand for the many cleaning purposes about a ward, otherwise articles are apt to get used which are worthy a better purpose.

It is not really necessary to clean the tops of lockers with turpentine or methylated spirit. A wash with soap and water is sufficient.

FIRES.

Fires require common-sense in the making up. First, all dust should be raked out gently; then large pieces of coal should be built up, so as to allow a good current of air. On top of this put the slack, and even a little water if the ward is already sufficiently warm. Or balls of old paper, squeezed out in water, will, if mixed with good coal, lengthen the life of a fire.

LIGHTS.

Lights should never be switched on as a matter of routine, but left out till they are really required, and they should not be left burning in kitchens, bathrooms, &c., when no one is there.

DRUGS.

Drugs should not be kept in the ward cupboards in large quantities, as they may deteriorate and have to be thrown away.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss J. Roberts, Miss P. Thomson, Miss M. Ellerton.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Give the most pathetic, and the most amusing true stories you have heard in connection with the war.

Writing on hospital waste in the *American Journal of Nursing*, Miss Laura A. Wilson, R.N., says in part:—"When the busy hospital superintendent is interrupted in her legitimate work by the incidental caller with time on his hands that are unused to service, the waste is apt to be grievous.

When a whole group of people is kept waiting in the operating-room for the chief surgeon, who fails to appear at the appointed hour, the waste of time, and the drain upon the nervous energy of that group, are greater than they would have been had the task been performed at the appointed hour.

Again, are the various hospital duties performed more slowly than the average pace? Is time wasted in this manner? Do the nurses walk around the bed six times in making it, when four times would accomplish the task? It does not require a certified accountant to discover the waste in money by such procedure. More nurses and more employees are required, with a consequent outlay of more money for salaries and maintenance of the workers, not to mention the waste of good nervous energy and of good nurses by the poor training thus encouraged."

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