

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

HOW WOULD YOU CARE FOR BEDS, BEDDING BLANKETS, RUBBER SHEETING, AND WARD LINEN TO KEEP THEM ECONOMICALLY HYGIENIC, WHEN IN HOSPITAL USE?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss R. E. S. Cox, The Bungalow, Park Road, Montin, Manchester.

PRIZE PAPER.

The *beds and bedding* of a hospital ward require a great deal of care and forethought to keep them in good condition. The beds should be frequently and systematically brushed and at the slightest sign of wearing sent to be repaired at once. The beds should be stoved after each patient.

Treating the bedding specifically:—Pillows and bolsters should be occasionally emptied, the ticks washed, and the feathers, flocks or fibre with which they are filled be cleaned before refilling. Pillows used for placing under patient's knees, leg rests, &c., must be kept quite separate and never used for pillows in the ordinary way. In cases where there is likely to be any hæmorrhage or discharge from the head, neck, or face, the pillow should be covered with a batiste or jaconet cover before putting on the ordinary pillow slip.

Sheets, draw-sheets.—Pillows and bolster-slips and counterpanes when soiled may be sent to the laundry in the ordinary way, and should be changed regularly. Also each fresh patient should have fresh linen. After infectious cases the linen should be soaked in a solution of carbolic (1-40) for several hours before sending to the laundry. When they are returned from the laundry the Sister should sort out the articles, returning any she does not consider quite clean, putting aside all that need repairing and get replaced at once any too much worn for further use, in this way the stock is always kept in good condition.

Blankets.—To be economical and at the same time hygienic with blankets, is rather more difficult. Unless very carefully washed they will soon become thickened and hard so the nurses should be taught to be careful in the use of blankets. In making bed they should not let them brush on the floor to gather up mere dust (of course, this applies to all bed clothes). About once a week they should have a good shaking to free them from dust. Sometimes clean blankets have only just been put on when a patient vacates a bed or the bed may have only been occupied a few days, in this case it is a pity to have them washed unless the case has been a contagious one. They should be well shaken, put in a

bag, and sent to the stove, and then given a good airing in the sunshine and if not soiled may be used again for such purposes as blanket bathing for the admission of dirty patients. These should, of course, be kept separate from the laundered ones and used with discretion.

Rubber Sheetings.—It is better not to let these get very dirty. They should never be folded but always rolled. When taken from the beds they should be spread on a board and smeared over with a little soft soap, rolled up and allowed to stand in cold water for an hour or so, then again spread on a board and rubbed with a cloth, "not scrubbed as this soon wears off the rubber." They must then be rinsed and allowed to dry over a rail, when perfectly dry they are put on a roller with a little Boric powder sprinkled between to prevent sweating. When not in use they should be looked at occasionally, as once they have been used and washed they are likely to mildew. Grease should never be brought in contact with rubber sheeting. The rest of the ward linen such as towel, dressing covers, screen covers, table cloths, &c., are laundered in the usual way and regularly inserted so that they may be kept in good condition.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss Winifred Appleton, Miss Amy Foster, and Miss E. O. Walford.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What is rabies? Describe the nursing treatment.

THE SCIENCE OF DOMESTIC EQUIPMENT.

One of the most important duties of a ward Sister is the care of hospital equipment and stores, and without a "domestic" instinct no woman can rank as a first-class ward Sister or nurse. The cost and care of hospital property should therefore form part of the training of every nurse. There should be attached to every hospital a well-arranged "Linenry" and Domestic Store Department, and in charge of this department should be an expert who understands the cost, use, and care of every section of such a department. Three months' training in Domestic Equipment would be invaluable to every nurse. Here she would be taught to estimate pure from shoddy goods, and to use the microscopic "eye" to count threads to the inch in sheetings, and detect evasion of contract. She would learn prices, and how to store goods so as to keep them clean and aired. She would learn how

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