

and nursing professions should aim at so raising the standard of public health through better conditions of living and a greater knowledge and practice of hygiene, that many of the cases which now crowd to hospitals for treatment shall in the future be non-existent. Unless this is impressed on nursing students, the absorbing interest of their work may cause them to regard disease from quite a wrong view point.

SURGICAL TECHNIQUE.

In briefly describing the rules of surgical technique and defining the two principles of antiseptics and asepsis, the author emphasises that "these methods will fail in their object unless the nurse maintains an attitude and practice of surgical cleanliness. It must be her one and un-deviating purpose to act with such regard for the fastidious cleanliness of everything under her care that germs are reduced to a harmless minimum, even though they cannot be entirely destroyed. . . . Judged from the wider aspect she should be so imbued with the spirit of cleanliness that she will keep herself and her clothing clean even while doing the dirtiest work. . . . She will use such things as porringers, trollies, towels, clothes, &c., for their specific purpose only, never using dirty polishing rags, especially for clean surfaces, never mixing porringers used for sterile and un-sterile things, and always working from 'clean to dirty.'

"She must never leave sterile or clean things exposed, to be infected by the air. She must 'make clean and keep clean,' carefully and conscientiously, forming good habits by punctilious attention to minute detail, and by the most careful forethought during the early years of her training."

FOOD AND FEEDING OF PATIENTS.

Miss Gullan reminds us that "the feeding of a patient is an essential part of a nurse's work, and requires intelligent and sympathetic understanding, as on it largely depends the patient's recovery. The waste of disease must be made good, resistance must be built up to fight the disease successfully, and faulty metabolism must be corrected, and all by food.

"Feeding is not a strong point with the average nurse. She is too apt to follow a mechanical routine and provide a monotonous diet that militates against full benefit being derived from the food, forgetting that the refusal of a feed by a patient is often a sad reflection on her own nursing powers."

In regard to water, she reminds her readers that "drinks of water are a great comfort to the patient, especially in fever, where the thirst is great, as they make good the loss of fluid from the tissues attendant on high fever, dilute the circulating toxins and help to flush the system. . . . Children require a great deal of water, and restlessness and peevishness can frequently be controlled by drinks of water." Again "water is absorbed almost entirely by the colon—a fact of

great clinical importance, permitting of stimulation and feeding per rectum."

NORMAL AND ABNORMAL STOOLS.

The collection and description of a patient's stools are part of a nurse's duty, and the normal stool and the alterations caused by diet and drugs are noted, followed by a description of abnormal stools and the conditions indicated thereby. Thus—"small clots or black specks, so frequently seen in typhoid stools, denote capillary oozing during the separation of the sloughs, and provide a warning that should not be overlooked"; and again, "After treatment to kill the (tape) worm and cause evacuation of the head—usually by the administration of extract of male fern—the stools should be carefully sieved over black crepe, that the tiny white triangular head may not be missed as it is conclusive evidence of cure."

A DISINFECTING BATH.

We do not agree with the teaching to give a disinfecting bath of 1 in 100 carbolic, for the reasons that nothing weaker than 1 in 40 can be considered a germicide, and also it is a wasteful method. It is better to take an ordinary bath, and then sponge with a reliable disinfectant of sufficient strength.

ENEMATA.

A warning is given not to drop oil on the draw-sheet in administering an oil enema and so damage the mackintosh below. "If such should occur, the heat of the body will rapidly drive the oil through, and dissolve the rubber in that part unless the sheet is removed after the accident."

Many more interesting quotations could be made from this admirable book, but enough have been given to show that it is both sound and practical. Nurses and their teachers will be well advised to procure a copy, to study it carefully, and keep it by them for reference.

We presume that by and by the Education and Examination Committee, appointed by the General Nursing Council, will be instructed to compile an up-to-date list of works to be officially recommended to teachers and students of nursing. No doubt "The Theory and Practice of Nursing," by Miss M. A. Gullan, the talented Sister Tutor at St. Thomas's Hospital, would be included in such a list.

E. G. F.

THE NATIONAL HEALTH. LIVING-IN ON CANAL BOATS.

The Minister of Health has appointed a Committee to inquire into the practice of living-in on Canal Boats in England and Wales, and to report whether any alteration in the practice is desirable.

The Minister of Health has appointed Dr. Alexander Macphail to be a Medical Officer of the Ministry. His first duties in the Ministry of Health will be in connection with the administration of the Anatomy Acts, which has been transferred to the Ministry from the Home Office.

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