

workers must therefore be concentrated on creating in the individual the same sense of responsibility for personal health as existed in the community for communal service. The Ministry of Health was a co-ordination of departments; it was not and never should become a bureaucratic organisation forcing upon an unwilling people hospitals and clinics, doctors and nurses.

RACIAL ADAPTATION.

Dr. F. G. Crookshank maintained, in regard to influenza, that if we profit by experience, and keep the memory of previous epidemics in mind, we shall be able ultimately to forecast the coming storm when it first appears on the horizon a cloud no bigger than a man's hand. A pandemic of influenza appeared to be a co-ordinated series of happenings—in which individuals and particular sets of circumstances played their part, but was ultimately caused by forces or agencies, widely affecting the whole set of conditions of life upon this planet. Why was it, that at such irregular but definite intervals as to be almost predictable (like the return of a comet) by mathematical calculation, there should be such a repetition of similar and widespread disorders of health if there be not in the background some general factor, telluric or cosmic, involving periodic variation in the conditions of all forms of life—human, animal, vegetable, and even microbic? There appeared to be every hope that investigation on the lines of historical, philosophical, and epidemiological enquiry would enable such measures to be concerted as would fortify the world populations against the coming of the catastrophes, and such measures as will enable these populations best to help themselves in the face of actual danger. Long and broad views must be taken, and if this were done the experience of one generation would not be forfeited by the next but would be handed down, a rich legacy of increasing capacity for racial adaptation for the benefit of those who came after us.

PERSONAL AND DOMESTIC HYGIENE.

Mrs. George Cadbury, who presided over the section of personal and domestic hygiene, referred to the testimony to the practical value of the work which is being done in the schools from a medical man who recently told the Birmingham Hygiene Committee that in the examination as certifying surgeon under the Factory Act of a number of boys and girls who had just left school, he had been much struck, he said, by the improved physique and general well-being of these children. He believed that we were beginning to reap the reward of medical and dental supervision.

Referring to the housing question, Mrs. Cadbury asked: "Can people living in a back-to-back house or a sunless alley possess any power of initiative, or will to improve? Yet even in such places there are wonderful women, who rise above their surroundings and exercise imagination and powers of organisation. When I see a group of tidy children, clean, brushed and fed, coming forth from such surroundings, I bow in admiration before the Madonna of the slum."

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

POPULAR CHEMICAL DICTIONARY.*

We have pleasure in bringing to the notice of the authorities of nurse-training schools as well as of individual nurses the "Popular Chemical Dictionary," by Mr. C. T. Kingzett, F.I.C., F.C.S., author of "Chemistry for Beginners, and 'School Use.'"

The book should be included in all reference libraries for nurses, for it fills a place hitherto unfilled, and within the limits of a single volume gives in simple language concise and up-to-date accounts of the subject of chemistry, the laws and processes, the chemical elements, the more important and organic substances and the methods of their preparation and manufacture. These are subjects of which nurses know little, but with which, in the practice of their profession, it is very desirable that they should be acquainted, hence the value to them of a book of reference which can readily be consulted.

Subjoined are some examples of the information which may be obtained on consulting the book:—

Amalgams.—The name given to any combination of other metals with mercury. Gold and lead, for example, are somewhat easily dissolved by liquid mercury in varying proportions; such combinations, however, are probably not definite chemical compounds, but mere mixtures. The potassium and sodium amalgams decompose water, giving off hydrogen, and are frequently used as reducing agents. Amalgams of gold and copper are used by dentists as stoppings for teeth.

Cloves.—The undeveloped flower buds of the clove tree (*Eugenia caryophyllata*) used as a spice. The essential oil of clove is obtained by distillation of the buds and flower stalks with water. It is a pungent smelling liquid, containing from 85 to 90 per cent. of eugenol ($C_{10}H_{12}O_2$) and a small quantity of a terpene isomeric with turpentine.

Dry Rot.—A chemical decomposition of wood or changes of composition induced by the agency of fungi (especially *Polyporous hybridus*, and *Thelaphora puteana*) and other causes; the proportion of carbon and hydrogen contained in the wood being reduced by the production of carbon dioxide and water. In other words, it is an act of slow oxidation accompanied by a loss of density of the wood until the latter, as in the case of hollow tree trunks, becomes rotten.

Osmosis.—The mixing of two liquids separated by a porous diaphragm; for instance, if a bladder containing alcohol be placed in a basin of water, some of the spirit will pass through the diaphragm into the water, and some of the water will pass through it into the alcohol.

It will be realised that the book contains a fund of useful information, which is very attractively presented, and its value is increased by the excellent and numerous illustrations.

* Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 8, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C. 2 Price 15s.

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