

the one sure protection against smallpox was vaccination.

Touching on the work of the voluntary hospitals, Mr. Chamberlain said we need not take a despairing view of the future, but pointed out that every hospital now had a terrible waiting-list of people who were in immediate need of treatment and could not get it because they could not get beds. Unless the voluntary system was able to provide for the inevitable growth in the number of beds required in the country, and to bear the increased burden of maintenance necessitated by that, it could not be said to be standing on safe ground.

#### NOT TOUCHED UPON.

In conclusion, the Minister said there were many subjects connected with his Department which he had not touched upon, and we may point out that one of the most essential is the work of trained and registered nurses. Whether in the Department of National Insurance, of the prevention of disease and of shortening its duration, of lessening infantile mortality, and of raising the standard of national health, the work of trained nurses is one of the most effective means. The fact that neither the Minister nor any member who followed him pointed this out shows the lack of knowledge and appreciation which still exists as to the national value of the health work carried on by trained nurses.

### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY HOW YOU WOULD PREPARE THE FOLLOWING BATHS, NAMELY:—ALKALINE, SALINE, MUSTARD, STARCH, SULPHUR.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Mrs. M. E. E. Farthing, S.R.N., Certified Midwife, Hawthorne Lodge, Knutsford Road, Latchford, Warrington.

#### PRIZE PAPER.

(a) In an ordinary large bath a ten-inch depth of water is about 30 gallons, and I shall give quantities of solution to add to this quantity. For smaller baths, of course, smaller proportions must be used. Alkaline, saline, and starch baths are very beneficial in certain skin diseases, and for sloughing burns alkaline baths have proved most efficient. Continuous baths are frequently ordered for sloughing ulcers or burns. These must be given with great care regarding temperature of bath, &c. Temperature should be between 98° and 100°. The patient is generally slung in a hammock, with an air cushion under his head. The hammock is attached to the ends of the bath. Macintoshes and blankets are placed over the top to help to maintain the tempera-

ture. In adding hot water great care must be taken to well diffuse the water. Patients treated thus need a good diet, as wasting often results. The baths must not be continued longer than ordered by the medical officer, and great care must be taken that the patient does not take cold after.

"Alkaline."—Half a pound of borax or bicarbonate of soda, dissolved in a gallon of water and added to 30 gallons of water in an ordinary bath, at a temperature of between 98° and 100°. It is well to obtain instructions from the doctor as to whether the patient is to have hot or warm bath.

(b) "Saline."—To the same amount of water add a solution formed of two pounds of salt dissolved in a gallon of water.

(c) "Mustard Bath."—Tie one pound of mustard in a double muslin bag, pour one gallon of boiling water over it, and leave it to stand for a quarter of an hour, then add to 30 gallons of water, at a temperature of 98°; for a foot-bath, one tablespoonful to the gallon is generally ordered, but it must be weaker for children and not so hot. If giving a mustard bath to a baby for convulsions, care must be taken to use a double muslin bag, as any particles of mustard floating on the water might adhere to the skin and blister it. Also take great care to protect the eyes.

(d) "Starch."—Mix two pounds of starch to a paste, add boiling water until quite thin, then add this mixture gradually to 30 gallons of water. Temperature between 98° and 100°. Well stir with hand.

(e) "Sulphur."—Potassa sulphurata is the best for this purpose as it dissolves well. Four ounces of potassa sulphurata, dissolved in a gallon of boiling water, and added to 30 gallons of water. Temperature, 98° to 100°. Hot water must be added to keep up the temperature of bath, as patients have to soak in this, as a rule, for from 15 to 20 minutes. In cases of scabies it should, if possible, be given in front of a fire, and the ointment, generally prescribed, rubbed in before the fire whilst the body is warm. Old, worn shirts and underwear should be used, and destroyed when finished with, and they should always be separately washed. Patients requiring this treatment need strict isolation.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss Phœbe Goddard, Miss M. Ramsey, S.R.N., Miss B. James, Miss N. Tomlinson.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Describe (a) the symptoms, (b) the nursing management, of a case of concussion.

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