

The Central Office is constantly kept informed by Head Teachers and Medical Officers of Health of outbreaks of infectious disease. Schools where such cases occur are thus under observation, and at the threat of an epidemic the Central Office furnishes any necessary particulars to the local Assistant Superintendent of Nurses, who arranges to detach the district school nurse from her routine work in order to pay extra visits to the school specially involved. This may entail a daily visit to the school and home visits to all children proved to be "contacts," seeking information and giving advice as may be required. The Medical Treatment Centres (or clinics) are, as a rule, organised by Voluntary Associations, but the nurses working at these centres are usually school nursing sisters on the Council's Staff. These centres may be likened to the out-patient department of a hospital, and the duties of the nursing sisters consist in organising the work at the Centre, helping the doctor and dentist in small operation cases, and applying dressings where necessary. Since the close of the war, two small hospitals have been established where children suffering from tonsil and adenoid trouble are received for operation and detained under skilled nursing supervision for two nights. At each of these two centres is a staff of a Sister-in-charge and four or five assistant nurses.

There are 37 schools for physically defective children and four open-air schools for debilitated children. To each of these schools is attached a school Sister or Nurse, according to size, who carries out such instructions as are given her by the school doctor, does small dressings, and exercises supervision over the arrangements made for feeding of the children.

The following in my opinion are the necessary qualifications to be held by Nurses who mean to devote their lives to Public Health Nursing.

A three years' trained and certificated Nurse from good Training School, registered by the G.N.C., and preference is given to candidates holding a Health Visitor or School Nurse certificate.

In addition to the above, training in an Infirmary, District, or M.A.B. Hospital is most valuable. Many of the L.C.C. Nursing Staff hold all these qualifications, and are, therefore, fully equipped for all emergencies.

Uniform is supplied to the Nurses of the value of £10 per year. I need not describe it, as it will be seen in the accompanying illustration, but I may add that the coat of dark blue serge has a warm lining for winter wear, which is detachable for the summer; this has been found more convenient than supplying two coats in alternate years.

The District School Nurses carry a bag with the necessaries for their work, such as a bowl, disinfectant, and aluminium comb for examining the hair, a spirit lamp and forceps for ringworm cases, scissors, bandages, &c., to say nothing of the numerous forms which have to be filled in and sent up daily in reporting their work.

The clerical work which the Nurses have to do is a very important part of their daily routine, and I often wish that more attention was given to this branch during a Nurse's training; good writing is so rare, and accuracy so essential in submitting reports and filling in forms.

Last, but not least, comes the question of temperament. All the good qualities of a well-trained woman find scope in Public Health service, and, in addition, the Nurse must be possessed of an earnest desire to do good in her generation. The life is one of self-sacrifice and hard work, but to one who realises this it brings an ample reward in the appreciation of those amongst whom she works, and the continuous improvement in the condition of the children in the schools of London.

## THE L.C.C. SCHOOL NURSES' UNION.

The London County Council School Nurses' associated in the L.C.C. School Nurses' Social Union, are affiliated to the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, and are thus federated in the International Council of Nurses. Miss H. L. Pearse is President, Miss Parkman Organising Secretary, and Miss K. Hilton Treasurer.

## PRESERVATION OF THE TEETH.

The British Dental Association (23, Russell Square, London, W.C.1.) have issued a pamphlet and card of recommendations for the preservation of the teeth, which we hope may find their way into many homes. The Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education in a memorandum submitted to the Committee on the Dentists' Act, 1878, estimates that out of 6,000,000 children on the registers of Elementary Schools in England and Wales, not less than half—or 3,000,000—are in need of dental treatment, and not less than 500,000 urgently so.

On the card we are given Three Things to Remember and Three Things to Do.

*Remember :—*

1. Sound teeth are of great importance to good health.
2. Tooth decay is chiefly due to food remaining in contact with the teeth after meals.
3. Consult a dentist regularly.

*To Do :—*

1. Eat hard food.
2. Chew well.
3. Clean the mouth after meals.

The pamphlet informs us that decay is caused by some kinds of food (chiefly of a starchy or sugary nature) remaining in contact with the teeth. This food decomposes, forming acids; these attack the enamel, which covers the teeth, and dissolves it.

To prevent decay and thus avoid dental trouble the right food must be eaten properly. Expectant and nursing mothers should be specially careful to do this. The food for such mothers must contain enough vitamins and bone and tooth-forming substances, and all the required substances can be obtained in a diet including butter, eggs, green vegetables, fruit and milk.

For infants, the milk of the healthy and properly-fed mother is the only correct food. After weaning, children are often fed too much on slop food; as soon as a child has teeth enough to chew with, it is important to give it a proportion of food which requires chewing. Chewing at a chicken or chop bone is good. Crusts and rusks are useful, but the eating of all starchy food should be followed by orange or other fruit juice. As children grow older, raw fruit, especially apples, should be added to the diet at the end of meals. Such foods leave the mouth clean and are good for the general health. The more the jaws are used for slow and thorough chewing, the better will they grow, and the less likely are the teeth to be misplaced or liable to decay.

The pamphlet touches on the bad effect poisons in the blood have on the teeth; advises that teething powder should not be used. So-called "comforters" should not be used, as they lead to deformed jaws, and such bad habits as thumb and finger sucking should be prevented. The proper use of the toothbrush is explained, cleaning of teeth and gums is recommended after each meal.

The "Don'ts" and "Do's" should be kept in mind.

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