

room fire, and the lack of air and exercise are outstanding wants which the nurse is perhaps too little aware of and too often neglects.

The disabilities described apply, no doubt, more particularly to nurses engaged in the great London hospitals from which my information chiefly comes. Probably quite another kind of trouble besets the nurse who works on her own either in district work or in private practice. Here exposure to weather is probably as important as in the case of doctors, and the nurse has often to travel much less comfortably than a doctor, *e.g.*, either on foot or on a push bicycle. Accommodation which is thought good enough for the nurse in private houses is, again, often disgraceful, and she is very liable to be overworked, with little or no off-duty and with no companionship.

Here are many readily avoidable causes of illness, and the best means of avoiding them is perhaps to draw the attention of the nurses themselves to their importance.

Recent advances in methods of bacteriological investigations allow of some valuable discrimination of the susceptibility of individual to certain infections, diphtheria and scarlet fever in particular. By what is known as the Schick test it is now possible, by a simple intradermal injection, to ascertain which persons are likely to contract diphtheria, or to suffer most mischievously from an attack, and nurses in many public institutions are now tested in this way; those giving what is regarded as a positive reaction are immunised by repeated minimal doses of the toxin against the disease. Similarly, the Dick test is used to discover special vulnerability to scarlet fever. These precautions are naturally most useful for nurses in fever hospitals, but their simplicity makes them available and increasingly used, for all nurses who may be exposed to infection by these diseases.

The service to the community rendered by nurses is of such prime importance to the public that I submit that the public are vitally interested in securing such conditions for the work of nurses as tend to bring out of their best. So avoidable a cause as ill-considered dietary should be immediately eliminated, and I submit that we might take a leaf out of the book of our American cousins, who are much more alive to the advisability of having the advice of dietetic experts in arranging the feeding of inmates of large institutions. It is impossible to expect people untrained in this very important subject to be able to contribute such special knowledge, and it would probably be an economy to add to the personnel of a great hospital a special officer detailed for this work, as is so widely done in American institutions.

#### ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, 1929-1930.

The Eleventh Annual Report of the Ministry of Health, 1929-1930 presented by the Minister of Health to Parliament, by Command of His Majesty the King, in June, 1930, is now obtainable\* and should be studied by those interested in the National Health, amongst whom are trained Nurses.

The subjects dealt with in the Report fall under the main heads of Public Health, Local Government and Local Finance, Poor Law, National Health Insurance, and Contributory Pensions.

It is recorded that 1633 candidates from poor law training schools for Nurses passed the preliminary examination of the General Nursing Council in 1929 and 1541 the final.

69 poor law infirmaries train nurses in midwifery under the rules of the Central Midwives Board, and 603 nurses trained in these infirmaries received the certificate of that Board in 1929.

\*H.M. Stationery Office, Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2. Price 4s. 6d. net.

#### PROPAGANDA ON THE SUBJECT OF VENEREAL DISEASE.

The Minister of Health recently received a deputation from the British Social Hygiene Council. The deputation was introduced by Dr. Somerville Hastings, M.P., and included: Sir Basil Blackett, President of the Council; Professor F. J. Browne, Professor of Obstetrics, London University; Professor Bostock Hill, Chairman of the Propaganda Committee; Mrs. Neville Rolfe, Secretary to the Council; Mr. E. B. Turner, Vice-President of the Council.

The deputation urged the importance of further propaganda on the subject of venereal disease, and asked the Minister to issue a Circular to local authorities pressing them to greater activity in this matter.

The Minister undertook to consider carefully the suggestion made to him.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

E. H. S. writing on Red Cross Nursing problems in this quarter's "The World's Health," states: "Two important Reports to be submitted to the Fourteenth International Red Cross Conference are those presented by the League of Red Cross Societies on 'The Enrolment of Trained Nurses and the Training and Enrolment of Voluntary Aids,' and the 'Report of the Education Committee of the International Council of Nurses.' . . . The consideration of these two Reports at this time by this highest Red Cross Society assembly is particularly pertinent, and any action taken in regard to them should have far-reaching effects for some time to come. . . . Those interested in the development of nursing are to be congratulated upon having at their disposal a document as valuable as 'The Report of the International Council of Nurses.' Never before has a similar study been available. That it is not possible of achievement for some time to come in many countries is admitted, that it will, in some details, necessitate slight adaptation to suit the needs and conditions in others is undoubted. But for a statement of fundamental principles and as an ultimate aim in all development its value cannot be over-estimated. Red Cross Societies, using this as a guide for the organisation or development of their education programme, may be assured that they are building soundly and adopting standards worthy of the finest traditions of nursing, and of Red Cross aims and ideals."

Miss Alicia Lloyd-Still, C.B.E., R.R.C., is the representative of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain on the Education Committee of the International Council of Nurses, and the Committee is composed of prominent nurse educationalists from all over the world.

How we wish our international colleagues could have been present at the Dinner at the Guildhall recently promoted by the League of Nations Union, in honour of the delegates of the Dominions and India to the Imperial Conference and of the delegates to the eleventh Assembly of the League of Nations.

The Prince of Wales was the chief speaker, and as His Royal Highness drafts his own speeches, what he said was inspired by fine feeling and excellent sense.

We are impressed, and we feel sure our international colleagues will also be, by the following sentence when speaking of war: "The way to prevent war is not by some sudden and violent action at the eleventh hour, but by the gradual and steady formation of habits of international co-operation and mutual trust."

That is the policy of our International Council of Nurses, which has already proved so invaluable in international nursing politics and friendship.

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