

lovely modern building. The Committee asked me to come over and organise the nursing service in the new building. We have a good staff carrying on at the Union Hospital, so here I am.

"We had a glorious day when we opened our School of Nursing building. You should see our beautiful Lecture Hall, demonstration room, etc. It would make your heart rejoice.

"The pageant was greatly appreciated. We have been asked to give it again when the Nurses' Association Conference meets here in July next."

Our profession could not have a more valuable personality at work in China than Miss Gladys Stephenson, somehow so comprehensive and understanding with her courage and wide sympathy and love of life. She understands and is understood by the brilliant Chinese people, the most instinctively artistic people in the world.

RESEARCH WORK.

Valuable work on cancer by a young research worker, in conjunction with her husband, has led to the committee of the Cancer Hospital, Fulham Road, S.W., taking the quite unusual step of awarding her a scholarship of £100. The recipient is Mrs. M. E. Boyland, B.A., the 26 years' old daughter of Major-Gen. Sir Frederick and Lady Maurice.

Mrs. Boyland has had an interesting career. As Miss Maurice she went from Cambridge to Heidelberg University, where a fellow student was Dr. Eric Boyland. They worked together for their examinations and afterwards at the Royal Institution. A little more than two years ago they were married in London, and the bridegroom's present took the form of a well-equipped laboratory which he installed at their home.

Dr. Banting, the discoverer of insulin, reports a special *Times* correspondent, is said to have made a new discovery for the prevention of silicosis, which has for many years arrested the development of mining, and caused the death of many miners.

Silicosis was proved some years ago to be caused by presence in the air of particles so fine that no means of controlling them have yet been found possible.

Professor Banting, it is reported, has now succeeded in discovering a method of attracting these fine particles away from the air by a mechanism of great ingenuity, so that in ten minutes from any explosion the air is completely free.

Dr. Banting is an official of the Canadian Government and works at the laboratory in Toronto which is named after him.

Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent by mining associations and Governments in the endeavour to stop silicosis, and the cost of caring for workers and compensation alone is believed in the case of gold to have raised the cost of manufacture four shillings in the pound.

The Government of the Belgian Congo has decided to use on a wide scale the Harris tsetse-fly trap, which has been invented by Mr. Harris, entomologist to the Government of the Union of South Africa. Successful experiments have been carried out with the trap, and it is hoped that it will prove the means of controlling the deadliest scourge of the African Continent—the purely tropical disease of sleeping sickness.

At the invitation of its Government, Mr. Harris has just spent three months experimenting in the Belgian Congo. He has so reduced the number of flies there that they now attack only wild animals.

TO PREVENT THE GROWTH OF BLINDNESS.

Drastic means to prevent the growth of blindness are proposed by Mr. J. Myles Bickerton, senior ophthalmic surgeon at King's College Hospital, in the current issue of the *British Medical Journal*. He suggests:

Constructive birth control to avoid overcrowding and poverty; Sterilisation of mental defectives (and possibly certain criminals);

Review of the obsolete and ancient abortion laws; Euthanasia for infants with gross defects to be made available for parents who wish to make use of it.

Mr. Bickerton points out that in the United Kingdom the registered blind in 1932 were reported as about 72,000 in addition to 2,000 war blind. About 8,000 of these blind are also mentally defective, and many are deaf.

There has been an increase of 35,000 in the registered blind in the last twelve years, while in the year 1929-30 the increase was 4,126, or over eleven a day. The total figure, however, is by no means a true indication of our blind population, for the following groups of persons are largely excluded, and may increase it to 250,000 blind persons:

- Almost all blind persons of the well-to-do classes;
- Infants below school age (many die blind);
- Those who become blind after leaving school at 14 or later, and are not registered until reaching blind pension age at 50;
- Those who become blind after 65 and are not registered;
- Those who are eligible for the blind pension, but who do not apply for it because they have never heard about it.

"In one random afternoon at hospital recently," says Mr. Bickerton, "I saw ten persons who, although blind, were not registered, or not likely to be registered as matters stand to-day."

He adds that blindness in the more active years of life is very largely avoidable. Much of it is due either to definitely dysgenic births or to the unrestricted production of children in poor or bad circumstances.

He estimates that 5 per cent. of the total amount of blindness is caused by accidents. Remarking that a fair number of these occur to infants, he declares that that fact has considerable relevance to the limitation of births.

NURSERY SCHOOLS AND TOWN PLANNING.

The importance of reserving sites for nursery schools in the programmes of slum clearance and rehousing that are to be carried out by local authorities, is urged by the Nursery School Association of Great Britain in communications which it has addressed to directors of education and to chairmen of municipal housing and town-planning committees.

In the letter to directors of education, the association says that it is important to eliminate the physical defects which are contracted during the pre-school years and which undermine the efficiency of the school medical service, while increasing its cost incalculably. It was necessary also to provide a suitable environment for the rapid social and mental development which was so striking a feature of the pre-school years.

Although new nursery schools could not be opened at the moment, it was desirable that the means by which the adequate care and education of children of between two and five years of age might best be provided should be considered and reserved at an early stage, when the plans for various new districts were being prepared.

The letter to chairmen of housing committees points out that the nursery schools so far established have maintained close co-operation with the homes they have served. Nursery schools with their simple, wholesome, and happy ways of life would be an invaluable help to families who were moving from slum conditions to new and untried ways of living. Such schools should be within easy reach of the children's homes; hence the need to consider their situation at the same time as re-housing was being carried out.

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