

“ESSENTIAL DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL.”

The City of London, on November 5th presented at the Guildhall a golden casket containing an Address to Earl Baldwin of Bewdley, K.G., recording appreciation of his great services to the nation and the Empire. In a stately setting a distinguished gathering, representative of public life, saw the honour conferred upon him. The Address, read by the Recorder, was presented by the Lord Mayor in a eulogistic speech.

Lord Baldwin, in returning thanks, ended his speech with the following inspiring words:—

SOUL OF THE PEOPLE.

“In that most interesting and discerning last volume written by Frederick Oliver he said that there was one thing common to all Prime Ministers through our history, however different their talents, their influence, and their lives, and it was this: that in his view there had not been one who was not consumed by a love of his country. A love of his country and of her people had sustained him through those difficult years more than any other motive that could exist. The thing that had lain nearest to his heart had been the welfare of our people, and, more than that, what he might call the soul of our people. In these days, amid the incalculable effects that had resulted from the War, in a time when men were searching in various countries of the world after old and new doctrines to find their peace and their stability—at a time when, owing to scientific discovery and the present trend of civilisation, mankind tended more and more to be mechanised, regimented, and drilled—at that time above all others statesmen should never lose sight of what he had called the essential dignity of the human, individual soul.

“That was well put by Montaigne, who said: ‘The want of goods is easily repaired, but the poverty of the soul is irreparable.’ Consciously or unconsciously in mankind, that urge for a fulfilment of the soul’s desire would come up again and again, and no crust of convention or government, or form of government, could ever restrain it, and it might burst through all that crust at any time, often to the amazement of their fellow-men and of their rulers.

THE INDISPENSABLE ELEMENT.

“He believed that in many English hearts that feeling was shared, and he was struck on finding his thought—not an original one—put in other words by a great Irish writer and mystic: ‘Human kindliness,’ he said, ‘is the indispensable element in society. Where that exists autocracies, aristocracies, oligarchies, and democracies may endure, but once it ceases to pervade a civilisation that civilisation begins to break up.’ It was because that human kindness, which was the basis—or, rather, he would say, within which existed the germ—of universal brotherhood, still existed in rich measure among our own people that he had faith to believe that in the ship of State our people would ride the troubled waters of this world and emerge from the tempest strengthened and purified.”

We claim that those who are attempting to organise and control the Nursing Profession shall take this lesson to heart.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

HOW MAY INFECTIOUS DISEASES BE COMMUNICATED? WHAT PRECAUTIONS ARE TAKEN TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this month to Miss Florence Ibbetson, Essex County Hospital, Colchester.

PRIZE PAPER.

MODES OF TRANSMISSION OF INFECTION.

Germes may be transmitted in any of the following ways:—

A. *By contact.*—This may be direct contact or indirect contact. Direct contact means coming into contact with an infected person or his discharges. For example, inhalation of droplets sprayed into the air in speaking, coughing or sneezing; inoculation of septic matter into a cut on the hands; or the carrying of infection, from such a patient as a typhoid fever case, on the fingers to the mouth at meal-times. Indirect contact means coming into contact with fomites-infected property, e.g., drinking from an infected cup, using an infected towel, applying infected instruments to open wounds.

B. *By carriers.*—A carrier is a person who does not show signs or symptoms of infection, yet harbours the germ and is able to transmit it wherever he goes. There are three groups of carriers:

1. Contact.
2. Convalescent.
3. Chronic.

Contact carriers are such people as nurses or relatives who have been in contact with infection. Convalescent carriers are people who have just recovered from the disease but still harbour germs. Chronic carriers may never have had the disease, somewhere they have picked up a germ of low virulence and, while it does not set up disease, their resistance is not high enough to kill the germ outright. Such people are very dangerous and are often the means of starting epidemics. A famous example is the American “typhoid Mary.” The germs most commonly carried are typhoid germs in the stools and urine, *Bacillus klebs-löffler* in the nose and throat and the meningococcus in the nose.

C. *Polluted water.*—Water is polluted by sewerage leaking into it. Either sanitation is bad generally or there is some defect such as a leaking sewer. In tropical countries it is very difficult to obtain fresh water that can be trusted. Diseases spread by infected water are the typhoid group, cholera and dysentery particularly.

D. *Infected food.*—Here the chief offender is cow’s milk, which is so easily infected by dirty handling, dust and flies. Cow’s milk may be the means of spreading diphtheria, scarlet-fever (Doncaster 1937), typhoid fever (Bournemouth 1936), summer diarrhoea and other fevers.

Salads may cause infection if the water in which they have been washed is polluted. Ptomaine poisoning is due to eating bad meats, etc.

E. *Animals* may transmit disease to man, e.g.—

Cow—Tuberculosis in its milk. Horse—Tetanus.

Sheep—Anthrax. Dog—Hydrophobia.

F. *Insects.*—These are much more dangerous than animals. In England the chief pest is the common housefly, which by its filthy habits can transmit almost any infection from filth on to human food. The body louse transmits typhus, the rat flea transmits plague. The anopheles mosquito is responsible for the spread of malaria.

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