

Regarding the duties of the Public Health Nurse I quote from Section 13 of the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, which gives a general survey of the scope for work. It says: "The school Nurse and Health Visitor are also important agents in School Hygiene. They may serve as links between the school and the home and can assist in recording the results of inspection: in securing and maintaining personal cleanliness and in carrying out medical advice concerning simple complaints. They are also able to give counsel in the home, to visit the children at home or in the school, and in many other ways to advance the cause of school hygiene.

"The Board of Education are satisfied that this work offers a great field of valuable service for the school Nurse, and they recommend that whenever practicable Education Authorities should secure the benefit and true economy which may be thus obtained.

"One of the objects of the new legislation is to stimulate a sense of duty in matters affecting health in the houses of the people, to enlist the best services and interest of the parents, and to educate their sense of responsibility for the personal hygiene of their children. It is in the home, in fact, that both the seed and the fruit of public health are to be found."

The central idea is the value of the individual as an element of society. The two problems are the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. The purpose is to aid in the producing of as high a type of human being as the inherited capacity of the individual entitles him to be.

The ideal is to give scientific nurture in perfect continuity from birth to manhood and womanhood, from the dawn of intelligence to the maturity of character. To maintain social efficiency for industrial work and National service.

Maternity and child welfare schemes operate chiefly from the welfare clinic. They deal with control of ante-natal, maternal and infantile mortality; ante-natal, dental and venereal treatment for expectant mothers, home visitation of expectant mothers and infants of pre-school age. School medical schemes operate on the beginning of the first social training on entrance to nursery school, bearing in mind that the child can only be educated as an individual in the mental stress of school life. Systematic inspection, treatment of minor ailments, supervision both of school and home environment are essential duties. The work radiates from school and clinic.

Tuberculosis work.—The focal point is the Dispensary for the treatment and supervision of patients and contacts; from there nurses visit homes of those returned from Sanatorium treatment, do the actual nursing of bed-ridden patients, and improve and supervise the home conditions for prevention and cure. From the above review of the foundations of public health schemes a vast amount of extensive specialisation and treatment has been inaugurated.

Sunray treatment, improved feeding and tonics have dealt successfully with malnutrition. Rheumatic clinics, orthopaedic clinics, remedial exercises in schools have dealt with physical, postural and crippling defects.

Ultra-violet rays, controlled feeding, open-air colonies have restored to health the incipient T.B. patient, and

the tendency of the Public Health system is to cooperate in all its branches for the common good.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Miss Amy Phipps, S.R.N., who sends an admirable paper, writes:—

The work of the Nurse is one of the most important parts in the formation of any Public Health policy. It is not over-stating the case to say that she is essential to it, and that no Public Health scheme could operate successfully without her.

Not only is she the connecting link between the various parts of the machinery, but also between this machinery and the public. She interprets health and the operation of the health services to the people for whose well-being these services exist.

Her actual place is still all too ill-defined, and this in spite of all that has been done by bodies such as the British College of Nurses, the Women Health Officers' Association, etc., to raise the status of Nurses and to stabilise her professional position.

The duties of the Public Health Nurse?

For the purposes of this paper, although we must mention hospitals and nursing homes, visiting and district nurses, convalescent homes, public assistance and slum clearance schemes, industrial, factory and workshops inspections, and the national midwifery service, as playing a distinct part in the nation's health, we are concerned only with those duties which belong to Public Health Nurses in the particular application of the term.

The importance of team-work cannot be over-estimated, and here I would mention in particular the general practitioner, who can be the Health worker's best friend and will value her loyalty and co-operation.

The duties of the Nurse in Public Health include:

(1) The definite duties of health visiting, school nursing, with following up of all cases. Supervision and organisation of welfare centres, including the work of voluntary workers.

Post-natal and ante-natal centres, with talks to mothers at each. The holding of mothercraft and fathercraft classes. Ophthalmic and dental clinics. Infant life protection visiting. Sanitary inspector. School inspections. Tuberculosis, dispensary and visiting. Inspection of midwives. Organisation of nutrition clinics. Home visiting in connection with infectious diseases.

(2) Occasional requirements: some Public Health authorities employ a health lecturer, others employ a trained dietitian in connection with school meals. The visiting of mental defectives may be required.

(3) Clerical work, a very real consideration in the apportionment of time.

(4) That addition which comes as a clause on every "List of duties" issued by Public Health authorities, *viz.*, "Any other duties which the Chief Medical Officer may from time to time direct."

QUESTION FOR NEXT MONTH.

State what you know of Cancer of the Skin, Lips, Mouth and Tongue, and what treatment you have been directed to apply to ameliorate such conditions.

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