

MEDICAL MATTERS.

A NEW PLASTIC EYE.

It is announced from the Office of the Surgeon-General, Technical Information Division, Washington, D.C.:

That a new plastic eye is being made by the United States Army which is lighter and more durable than glass and can be tinted to duplicate the appearance of the natural eye and fitted to provide as much motility as possible, thereby avoiding the appearance of staring.

First step in making the eye is to paint the "iris"—a thin celluloid disc, only one 10,000th of an inch thick. The "iris" is then embedded in a tiny plastic lens of acralain—a plastic that has been used in dentistry for the last 10 years.

The impression of the patient's eye socket is made with a new type compound, an alignote plastic, that is chemosetting. This mixed with water to make a paste, is injected with a syringe under the eyelid at body temperature without causing pain or discomfort. It sets to a rubber-like consistency in five minutes and is removed painlessly, giving a permanent record of every tissue contour within the socket. A plaster cast is then made from this replica and used to mould a wax model of the eyeball. The iris button is fitted into the wax and the whole unit is then fitted to the patient. The body temperature melts the wax slightly to produce an even better fit. A second cast is then made from this wax replica, the wax is melted away and the cavity filled with acrylic resin, tinted the shade of the patient's natural eyeball. This is baked for half-an-hour under a half-ton of pressure. When it comes from the cast it has on its front surface the tiny disc of the iris. It is then polished and the "veins" are applied—tiny rayon fibres, an innovation by Captain Don Cash, of Beaumont General Hospital, El Paso, Texas.

As a final step, the whole eye is dipped in a clear plastic solution, which produces a gleaming coating similar to the layer of liquid covering the natural eye.

This plastic eye is so durable it can be dropped on the floor and stepped on without injury.

The scientific information we receive from the office of the Surgeon-General at Washington is extremely valuable, owing to its novelty.

REPATRIATED PRISONERS OF WAR SUFFERING WITH TUBERCULOSIS.

The Minister of Health is anxious, as he feels certain that Local Authorities are, that everything possible should be done for the welfare of prisoners-of-war returning to this country suffering from tuberculosis. He has received an offer from the British Legion that local Branches of the Legion will once again be glad to give any help in this direction which Local Authorities may wish to invite from them with regard to repatriated prisoner-of-war patients for whose medical treatment, either institutional or domiciliary, authorities are responsible. The Minister feels that Local Authorities and their Medical Officers of Health will like to be reminded of this, and to consider conferring with local representatives of the British Legion as to any ways in which the latter might usefully render personal service to such patients approved by those responsible for their medical care.

MEMORIAL TO BRITISH CHILDREN KILLED IN THE WAR.

Thousands of beloved children have lost their lives in the war, many under very tragic conditions; it is well these dears are to be commemorated.

A performance of *A Night in Venice*, given at the Cambridge Theatre, resulted in £3,000 being raised for the new children's ward for St. Thomas's Hospital, which is to be a memorial to British children killed in the war.

WHAT TO READ

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS.

- "The Journal of Mary Russell." Storm Jameson.
- "Mine Eyes Have Seen." Alfreda Withington, M.D.
- "My Crowded Sanctuary." Clare Sheridan.

FICTION.

- "The Drums of Dombali." Eden Phillpotts.
- "Starbuck." John Selby.
- "Armour Against Love." Barbara Cartland.
- "High Tide at Noon." Elizabeth Ogilvie.
- "A Lady Fell in Love." Edward Woodward.

MISCELLANEOUS.

- "War Criminals and Punishment." George Creel.
- "The Promise." Pearl Buck.
- "The Transplanted." Frederick Niven.
- "The Future of the Colonial Empire." Sir Bernard Bourdillon.
- "Women Writers": Their Contribution to the English Novel, 1621—1744. B. G. MacCarthy.
- "Why Crime?" Claud Mullins.
- "Charles Dickens." Una Pope-Hennessy, D.B.E.
- "The Steep Ascent." Anne Morrow Lindbergh.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

THE PATIENTS.

DEAR MADAM,—I was dining with the family of one of the members of our committee,—an exceedingly generous man. We, of course, discussed the letters in the *Times*, on Nursing questions, and realised that "the patient" appeared to be non-existent, or at all events, a negligible quantity.

My instinct is that if our young women wishing to be nurses were appealed to in the old Nightingale spirit, there would be no shortage of nurses; over and over again, in interviewing candidates, I have been told, "I want to care for the patients; why all this theory—is there no scope in the wards for a practical nurse?" or "If things go on as they are—we practical girls will be eliminated."

I know the progress of medicine demands more scientific knowledge from student nurses,—but oh! how I wish we could encourage the girls who wish to devote themselves to the care and comfort of sick people. We were pleased with the claim of the Dean of the London Hospital, in the *Times*, where he writes: "A technical training alone is insufficient. Pride in nursing as the occupation for women—even for intelligent women, is essential and must be encouraged in all schools and universities." And now about *Hands*? A real nurse possesses a *touch* not to be acquired in books—however elegantly manicured. I am thankful nursing in my training days was inspired by sympathy for the patient *first*; do not let us eliminate this instinct by theory.

MATRON OF A COUNTY HOSPITAL.

"I MUCH PREFER MY DOGGIE WOG."

DEAR EDITOR,—Many thanks for THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. Here we read every word of it, and it is the one thing which helps us to carry on. This is a country hospital and there appears the utmost difficulty in obtaining the right type of woman to nurse the sick; and lowering standards of training and service is not going to save the situation. The modern girl has had so much liberty—the restrictions of ward work and direction are very irksome to her. Of course, much depends upon the Matron, sympathy with and understanding of girls are absolutely necessary—and when you are told: "I much prefer my doggie wog" the case is hopeless.—Yours,
T. P. G.

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