

on these interesting occasions and helps with the nursing afterwards. The Civil Hospital in Valetta is for the poor, and the one in Citta Vecchia—the old city—for tuberculosis cases only. The latter is called the Connaught Hospital, in honour of the Duke of Connaught's term of service in the Mediterranean.

King George V Hospital for Seamen has been built and opened since the war. The money was provided for its building and endowment, half by the son of a former Presbyterian chaplain to H. M. Forces, and half by public subscription. It was badly needed, as ships of all nations call at Valetta, and there was formerly no provision for any sick amongst the crews. The foundation stone was laid by Lord Methuen in 1919, just before the end of his term of service as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Maltese Islands. His interest in all that concerns the care and nursing of the sick is well known, and he continues to be President of the Hospital. The matron and sisters are all English.

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association maintain a small staff of English nurses to visit and nurse the wives and children of non-commissioned officers and men of both services in their own homes.

TEACHING OF MOTHERCRAFT.

BY DR. JANET CAMPBELL.

(WRITTEN FOR THE NATIONAL BABY WEEK COUNCIL.)

From the Red Cross Nursing Supplement.

It was realized early by the pioneers of the Infant Welfare movement that their strongest weapon in the fight to reduce the infant mortality rate and to improve the health of the surviving infants and little children was the intelligent co-operation of the mother. We cannot, unfortunately, do as we should like and provide a satisfactory environment for all babies. Only too often we have to make the best of surroundings which are anything but ideal. A sensible, well-informed mother can work wonders under most unpromising conditions, and the aim of Infant Welfare workers has therefore been to teach the mother every day rules of infant management and nursery care, and advise her how these may be applied in her individual case; to give her, in short, through the Infant Welfare Centre, a training in practical mothercraft.

The mother who comes to a centre does so of her own accord, and one may assume that she comes because she is keenly interested in her baby's health. She is prepared to take some trouble to obtain help, and one of the virtues of the centre is that the mother who attends is called upon to use her own brains and make a definite personal effort. She is not relieved of responsibility—she is advised what to do and how to do it, but it is for her to remember and carry out the advice, and the well being of the baby depends on her success in so doing.

In what way can mothercraft be taught? *First*, there is personal teaching at the Infant Consultation, and instruction given in this way by the doctor carries great weight. *Secondly*, there are the visits to the home by the health

visitor who follows up the medical advice, and adds what she can in regard to the domestic circumstances. *Thirdly*, there is the collective or class teaching at the centre, and I should like to say a few words on this. The most ordinary form of class teaching is the "Health Talk"—a short, simple address, illustrated when possible by practical demonstration, and leading up to informal discussion, given to all mothers present, or to small groups in turn. Almost any subject may be dealt with in this way. There may be a series of, say, six talks on infant feeding and management, or on personal and domestic hygiene. First Aid and Home Nursing are popular subjects. Talks may be given on matters of immediate interest, such as epidemic diarrhoea in summer, bronchitis in the winter, whooping cough or measles during an epidemic. The opportunity may be taken to explain what the Local Authority is doing for the welfare of mothers and children, or the reasons for establishing the school medical service, and the way in which parents can help to make those preventive services effective. Sex hygiene and the bringing up of adolescent boys and girls is a subject often welcomed by intelligent mothers, and it is often wise to consult the mothers themselves as to what they would like to hear about. These talks should not be ordinary lectures; they should be informal, brief, clear, and delivered in very simple language with plenty of illustrations; questions should be encouraged. Subjects should be as varied as possible and not limited to matters of infant feeding and management, which become wearisome to the mothers after too frequent repetition. A great opportunity is afforded of widening the mother's interests and arousing her intelligence, and it is well worth while spending time and trouble to make these lessons interesting and arresting. A sewing class is another valuable means of training. It may take many forms; there is the knitting class for vests, binders, etc.; the class for cutting out and making simple garments; the mending, patching and adapting class; and the class to teach expectant mothers to prepare their babies' clothes; or there may even be an ambitious dress-making or tailoring class. The teaching should not be too formal, nor should it follow too closely any set scheme. The object should be to teach the mother what she wants to learn, and gradually encourage her to undertake more systematic work. *Cookery* is a useful subject, but rather difficult to organise satisfactorily. Short of a regular cooking class, brief talks on dietetics, illustrated by simple cooking demonstrations, are valuable or a class illustrating nursery or invalid cookery may be tried.

The actual arrangements for teaching will depend on the accommodation, the type of women in attendance, the available teachers, the day or days on which the centre is open, and so forth. No centre should be considered too small or too crowded for teaching to be given. It is clearly more difficult to organize a health talk, for instance, when only one room is in use, than when a separate room can be allotted for this purpose and a nursery provided for the toddlers. In such circumstances teaching must clearly be more simple and less systematic. The important point is to emphasize the educational function of the centre, and not allow it to develop into a mere social afternoon with incidental weighing of infants.

The teaching must usually be given on the Consultation afternoon : few mothers can attend more than once a week, but classes for sewing or cookery or other subjects may be organized for the better educated or keener women on separate days. It is not always easy to find a good teacher. The Superintendent or Health Visitor is the obvious person to take the health talks if she is able to do so, but not every one can teach, and a simple lesson is often more difficult to give well than advanced instruction. An occasional short address by the Medical Officer is welcomed by the mothers. Members of the Voluntary Committee may be able to take certain subjects. A teacher of sewing is usually specially engaged. A variety of teacher as well as of subject helps to maintain interest.

The Infant Welfare Centre, in short, is a centre for preventive medicine, hygiene and popular education. It is not possible to estimate exactly what effect it has had upon the reduction of the infant mortality rate to 80 deaths per 1,000 in 1920, and 83 in 1921, but it must have played an important part, and that chiefly through its educational influence, not only upon the mothers in attendance, but upon doctors, nurses and the general public. The standard of mothercraft in the country as a whole has unquestionably been raised, and it is upon the quality of the care bestowed by the mother that the health of the infant and little child so largely depends.

CHEERFULNESS.

By P. GANAPATHY.

Laughing cheerfulness throws the light of day on all the paths of life--JEAN PAUL.

Cheerfulness is alacrity of spirits, in other words a state of moderate joy or good spirits. It is the leading quality essential for a person, the great source of happiness in life, 'the safeguard of character.' It is in virtue of this quality that Massinger has said that 'cheerful looks make every dish a feast.'

Cheerfulness is that calm temper of the mind which is not easily to be depressed, and which sustains prosperity without excessive joy, and adversity with patience and equanimity of temper.

Cheerfulness Milton cherished, as we find reflected in his melodious song of poetry. Cheerfulness was a companion of Dr. Johnson who showed extreme cheerfulness of mind. Cheerfulness never left Sir Walter Scott; he was ever lively and happy and used to be cheerful in thought, word and deed.

There are some men who are always happy, whose eyes beam with the light of mirth and cheerfulness, whose labour is accompanied and enlightened by this gift, who notwithstanding the thousand and one troubles they have to face, are ever happy and never seem to be dispirited. Such men are to be followed or rather envied. On the other hand there are persons who are not contented with whatever happiness they are blessed with, but still pine for more. Their life is but a continued suffering; they are never free from worldly afflictions and as a consequence soon fall a prey to misery.

Cheerfulness is 'an inborn temperament, the nurse of patience and the mother of wisdom.' It is the best of moral and mental tonics to wear away the