

Practical Points.

Low Infant Mortality of Japan.

A recent traveller from the Orient has shown that the infant mortality of Japan is lower than it is in Europe or America. This is as it should be in a country where the houses are off the ground a foot or two and have no cellars, and the air inside is as fresh as it is out; where, too, in such places at least as Tokio, everyone bathes and has a good scrubbing every day. From 800,000 to 1,000,000 persons go to the public baths of the capital daily, and that in a town with a population of less than 2,000,000. The extreme cleanliness of the Japs undoubtedly has a great deal to do in keeping the death-rate among children so low.

War with Mosquitoes.

The Commissioners of the Panama Canal have ordered 100,000 square yards of wire gauze mosquito netting. The probability is that this will not be enough, for the forty-seven miles of the projected canal requires an immense staff of labourers, all of whose houses, &c., it is intended to completely cover (as one house might be built within another), and the humming of *Stegomyia fasciata* and *Anopheles* are particularly boisterous in the region of the excavations. Already a Mr. Growley has applied for the contract to bury or embalm those who die of malaria and yellow fever. This should be comforting to the relations.

Thirst Following an Operation.

In a recent number of the *Medical Brief*, Miss Constance V. Curtis, Superintendent of the Phoenixville, Pa., Hospital, offers the following:—"The thirst after operations, where ether is used, is much allayed by giving an enema of one pint of normal salt solution, 100 deg. F., introduced with a rectal tube. It should be given before the patient leaves the table. Nausea is relieved by placing a piece of gauze saturated in vinegar over the patient's mouth and nose as soon as the ether is withdrawn."

Disinfection of the Clinical Thermometer.

Dr. Francis P. Denny calls attention to a method of disinfecting the clinical thermometer by putting a few drops of formalin into the thermometer case. Two or three drops of formalin (40 per cent. solution of formaldehyde) are put into the case and are absorbed by the cotton, which will remain moist a number of days. Formaldehyde gas is freely given off from the formalin, but is confined in the air-tight chamber of the case. The small size of the chamber, the high humidity, and the high temperature, if the case is carried in the vest pocket, furnishes conditions very favourable for the disinfectant action of formaldehyde. Where the thermometer has been used for a patient known to have a contagious disease, it is best to disinfect it outside the case, or at least fresh formalin should be added and the thermometer exposed to the gas several hours before being used again. By this method the thermometer is always disinfected after it is used with no loss of time to the physician, except the time it takes once in two weeks to add three drops of formalin to the case.

Nursing Echoes.

*** All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.



Guardians of the poor who are responsible for workhouse infirmaries will do well to note the attitude which, according to one of the inspectors of the Local Government Board, has been adopted by the Board with regard to the employment of young girls as nurses in these institutions. The Board refuses to sanction the employment as probationers of any young woman under the age of twenty-one, and in doing so is only acting wisely under present nursing conditions.

Our objection to the employment as probationers of young women in general hospitals and infirmaries under the age of twenty-one is not that numbers of them are not quite capable of assuming responsibility and performing their duties intelligently, but that the combined mental and physical strain of ward nursing is such that the health of the average girl will not stand it. Nursing if conscientiously done must be one of the most exhausting employments a woman can undertake; it is, therefore, well that the constitution should be well-established before submitting it to the inevitable physical strain.

Many of the poor of Kilburn have reason to be thankful for the good nursing and kindly attention given them by the Sisters of St. Peter's Home. To its wards not only the poorer classes are admitted, but also ladies who are in needy circumstances. A small charge is made to patients, but this is not nearly enough to cover the cost of maintenance, and the home and its various charities depend upon the help given them by associates who are interested in the work. In spite of St. Peter's Home being very unostentatious in itself, it does a great and extended work, having branches in Somerset, where there is a free home for consumptive cases, and a similar one at Cheddar; a home of rest near Ipswich, a holiday home at St. Leonard's, a home for the reception of crippled women who can do a little needlework at Hendon, the Sisters also superintend St. John's House, an Institution for Trained Nurses, which is so well known, in the Strand, and various other missions, whilst in Korea several Sisters are in charge of two mission houses.

Many nurses will be glad to know of the "Women's Dining Rooms Company," which has been

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