

cautions taken to bring the danger of infecting the wound to a minimum, but I wish to point out the inconsistency of paying so great an amount of attention to the possibility of introducing bacteria, many of them harmless, from one source and another, and neglecting that of the introduction of others, perhaps more dangerous, that are showered down through the air and projected from the mouth. I have made numerous exposures of Petri dishes to the air of operating rooms, and in every instance the great majority of the colonies produced have been of pyogenic organisms. The numbers deposited have varied widely, the maximum being 131 per square inch per hour.

In his work in the operating room, the surgeon is dependent to a great extent upon the care and thoroughness with which others, whose work he necessarily cannot supervise in every detail, carry out their part. He must assume that the dressings and sponges have been prepared with scrupulous care. He is, in a way, at the mercy of those in subordinate positions, whose carelessness or want of proper instruction may vitiate his best endeavours. To emphasise this point, I will give two illustrations:

The sterilising plant of a hospital is to me always an attraction, and whenever I visit one I inquire into the methods followed. I was present one day in a room fitted with as perfect a lot of apparatus as one could wish to see. The person in charge had packed one of the autoclaves with dressings, which were wedged in so tightly that one could find hardly a space between them large enough to admit even a finger. On my asking what measure of sterility was expected with such solid packing, I was informed that absolute sterility would be attained in an hour, the steam being under 15 lbs. pressure. Anybody who has ever studied steam disinfection scientifically is aware of the great necessity of loose arrangement of the objects under treatment, in order that the steam shall have as free access as possible to every part, and that the readiest means of preventing its action is solid packing.

(To be continued.)

New Insurance Scheme for Nurses

Under this heading we published an article in our issue of November 26th drawing attention to the advantages offered to nurses by the Edinburgh Life Assurance Company. It would appear that the Editor of the *Hospital* considers he possesses the monopoly of insurance schemes for nurses. At any rate, when a company offers them insurance facilities on a business basis, it is certain that its methods will be disparaged in the newspaper edited by the founder of the Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses. As the comments of this paper on our remarks afford ground for considerable criticism, we intend to refer to the article in a future issue.

Progress of State Registration.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NEW YORK STATE BOARD OF NURSE EXAMINERS.*

By JANE ELIZABETH HITCHCOCK, *Secretary*.

The State Board of Nurse Examiners came together for their first meeting in the Regents' Office at Albany on September 15th, 1903. All members were present, and also Secretary James Russell Parsons and Dr. Henry L. Taylor, of the Regents' Office. The Board organised by electing for president Sophia L. Palmer, of Rochester, and for secretary Jane Elizabeth Hitchcock, of New York. These officers continue to hold their respective positions.

The few hours of that first meeting were spent in trying to get a look into the future and see what manner of work lay before us. As a result of these observations the following subjects presented themselves, and so good was our foresight that they serve well as heads for this report to you:—

I. Registration of schools.

II. Registration of individuals under the first and second items of the waiver.

III. Registration of individuals under the third item of the waiver.

IV. Registration of individuals applying after the expiration of the three years of the waiver.

The last subject has not yet been considered, as there can be no call for a decision in that direction until after April 27th, 1906, and the Board has been fully occupied with the first three topics.

REGISTRATION OF TRAINING-SCHOOLS.

In taking up this first question the Board found itself confronted by a very difficult problem. The more radical way of recognising only the schools of the highest grade seemed unfair to the smaller ones, and yet the Board wished to stand for the highest requirements possible. There were many informal meetings for discussion of this question. The Board sought information, ideas, and enlightenment from all sides, but no one seemed quite ready to give a definite opinion as to the standard that could be demanded at the outset. After much deliberation, the following recommendations were presented to the Regents, as affording a standard both of preliminary education and professional training not too high to be reached by a large majority of the schools of the State:—

"I.—PRELIMINARY EDUCATION.

"All training-schools registered with the Regents of the University of the State of New York shall require of pupils applying for admission a certificate of graduation from a grammar school or its equivalent, giving preference to applicants who have had one year or more in a high school, or to students

* Read at the semi-annual meeting of the New York State Nurses' Association, October 18th, 1904.

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