

running of the eyes and nose together with a curious choking sensation when inhaled.

In its dry state it has absolutely no effect upon bright metals, and it is therefore unnecessary to protect such articles of furniture as brass bedsteads from its fumes, it therefore differs in this respect from sulphur.

It does, however, oxidise iron if it be not galvanised, painted or japanned.

Fabrics and colours, with the exception of aniline dyes, are unaffected by the gas.

Being of the same density as atmospheric air, it readily penetrates all chinks and crevices, and does not tend to collect like sulphur di-oxide in the lower parts of the room.

Formaldehyde gas has been proved by experiment to be germicidal to bacteria, and it instantly destroys vegetation.

During the disinfection of the National Sanatorium the surplus of gas left in the machine was discharged in the garden on one occasion; the plants and shrubs in the neighbourhood of the gas were immediately killed. On the other hand it was found to be not apparently fatal to low forms of animal life.

Pediculi were found alive on clothes which had been subjected to its fumes in an hermetically sealed chamber for twelve hours, and on another occasion a caterpillar was found alive in a room after its disinfection. It is suggested that either the original pediculi may have been killed and those found alive hatched, as the effects of the gas passed off, from eggs in the clothes (the gas being unable to penetrate the outer covering of the eggs), or that the lice may have hidden away in folds of the clothing, and the caterpillar similarly in the curtain from which it was suspended, the fabrics serving as protection from the fumes.

These points are of some importance, as in the event of the disinfection being carried out in a "dirty" dwelling formaldehyde gas cannot apparently be relied upon to destroy insect life, whereas sulphur is known to exterminate vermin, although its action on bacteria is questionable.

The preparation of rooms to be treated by the Kny-Scheerer process is most simple. All communications with the outer air, such as windows and ventilators, must be sealed by pasting paper over them. Mattresses should be propped up against chairs, so as to expose as much surface as possible on both sides; blankets, rugs, etc., should be hung in single folds, the object being to readily saturate them with the gas.

The whole process is singularly free from dirt, and no unpleasant odour can be detected a few hours after the room has been opened if a good current of air be caused to pass through it by means of widely open doors and windows.

HELEN TODD.

Legal Matters.

M'KENNA V. DELANY.

Miss Mary M'Kenna, a nurse in the Richmond Hospital, Dublin, recently obtained £500 damages in an action for breach of promise of marriage, the defendant being Mr. James Delany, County Surveyor, of King's County.

A settlement of the case was arrived at after a consultation between counsel, the terms being that the defendant apologised for and withdrew any reflection made on the family of the plaintiff. The meaning of that counsel explained was that there was an observation made in an affidavit with reference to the plaintiff's family, and the defendant very properly withdrew and apologised. The defendant further stated that any derogatory observations with reference to plaintiff, if made, were made without his sanction, knowledge, or approval, and also that he never made any imputation on the honour or respectability of the plaintiff. The parties, counsel said, had consented to the assessment of damages at £500, and costs as between solicitor and client.

The consent was made a rule of court.

KELLY V. M'MUNN.

In the King's Bench division the action for libel brought by Miss Kelly, a nurse in the Workhouse Hospital at Dromore West, against Dr. M'Munn, the doctor of the hospital, was heard before Mr. Justice Boyd. The damages claimed were £500. The alleged libel consisted of letters written by Dr. M'Munn as Medical Officer to the hospital, to the Local Government Board, complaining of the conduct of the plaintiff in connection with her duties as nurse. For the defence Counsel stated that the plaintiff was a relative of the Clerk of the Union, not a qualified nurse at all. It became the duty of the defendant to issue certain orders to her in connection with a Local Government regulation, which apparently she resented, and Dr. M'Munn felt compelled to report her to the Board of Guardians and the Local Government Board. The defence was that Dr. M'Munn made the reports in the discharge of his duty, that they were without malice and absolutely privileged. The plaintiff alleged malice, and said the defendant's treatment of her had caused her much annoyance. He had made her do night duty continually since last May, and now required her to do it permanently. Other charges were also made, and the plaintiff alleged that when she objected to the doctor keeping his dogs in the fever hospital, he posted some doggerel and insulting lines on her door.

Mr. Justice Boyd, having regard to the doggerel verses and other circumstances, said he could not regard the action as a bogus one. He would remit it to the County Court Judge.

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