

the dearth of efficient midwives is being proclaimed on all sides, it would surely be a fatal policy to eliminate some of the best training-ground for midwives in the country.

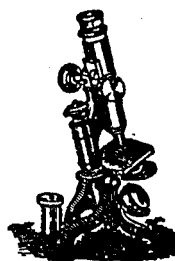
Annotations.

THE RISK OF FIRE.

The recent disastrous fire at the Colney Hatch Asylum has drawn the attention of public authorities to the necessity of providing against the risk of fire to which all buildings of a temporary character are specially liable. The first authority to deal with the matter in a comprehensive manner has been the Metropolitan Asylums Board, who have taken measures to render their temporary hospital at Tooting, generally known as the Fountain Hospital, as safe from fire as modern science can make it. An opportunity was given last week, at the invitation of Mr. J. Helby, chairman of the Works Committee of the Board, for a number of guests to view the fire-resisting works which have just been completed at the hospital. The buildings at this hospital were constructed in nine weeks in 1893 to cope with an outbreak of fever which occurred at that time. The managers of the Asylums Board decided to carry out certain fire-resisting works, with the double object of rendering them safer from the risk of fire and of adding to their permanence as buildings. These improvements have now been completed, and the managers claim that theirs is the first hospital of this character which has been so treated. They believe that, while the risk of fire will be greatly reduced, the life of the buildings has been extended by at least twenty years. The work, which has cost £10,200, or about £25 a bed, consists in covering all the walls with fire-resisting plaster and with sheets of uralite, a new fire-resisting material. All existing paint has been removed from the internal woodwork and a fresh coating provided, consisting of one coat of Bell's No. 1 fireproof (asbestos) solution, two coats of zopissa distemper, and one coat of varnish colour. After the visitors had inspected the new works a demonstration of the fire-resisting properties of uralite was given in the grounds. Two huts, one lined with uralite and the other matchboarded with deal, were simultaneously set on fire, and at the end of half an hour the latter was a charred mass, while the uralite hut had sustained no damage.

Medical Matters.

THE TREATMENT OF LEPROSY.



It is reported that Captain E. R. Rost, Indian Medical Service, resident medical officer of the Rangoon General Hospital, has succeeded in cultivating the bacillus of leprosy, and has made a substance from these cultures which he calls "leprolin," which, when injected into lepers, has a very marked beneficial action in alleviating the symptoms of the disease. He has discovered that a method of growing the bacillus of leprosy is to extract the salts from nutrient media, and that the bacillus of leprosy will not grow in the presence of salt. In order to make such a nutrient medium he distils beef extract soaked in pumice-stone in a current of super-heated steam, and obtains a medium in which the bacillus of leprosy and also that of tuberculosis grow with the greatest ease. "Leprolin" is made on somewhat similar lines to those first employed by Professor Koch in the manufacture of tuberculin. Over 100 cases of leprosy are now being treated in Burma by injections of this substance, and the treatment is also being tried in thirty different places in India. Already four cases are reported to have been cured, and in the great majority of those now under treatment the improvement has been very marked. At the last meeting of the local branch of the British Medical Association the four cases cured were inspected. One of these was a Burman, who, after a brief treatment of ten days, was apparently completely cured; he had had ulceration of the feet for five years and anaesthesia all over his legs. The action of "leprolin" is described as very similar to that of tuberculin in cases of lupus, except that there appears to be no danger in the injections of the former; so far, at least, in no case have there been any bad symptoms after the injection of "leprolin." Its most remarkable action is seen in the suddenness with which sensation returns in those patches affected by the disease where it had been formerly lost. The material appears to act beneficially in all varieties of the disease, the sensation returning in the white patches and the colour of the patches changing to normal in cases of white leprosy, and the nodules and ulcers disappearing in the nodular variety of the disease. The injections are given, as a rule, once a fortnight, and salt ointment is

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