

## Practical Points.

**Short Items of Practical Interest.** The *American Journal of Nursing* publishes the following items of practical interest:—

In using a rectal tube or catheter for giving a high enema there is less danger of the tube coiling up if it is inserted while the fluid is escaping, and the rectum is allowed to dilate before it is pushed further up.

A swab of cotton on a toothpick is better than a rag on the finger for washing the gums of a small child. It is also excellent for cleansing the nostrils and external ear.

Patients who object to food will frequently take a lightly beaten egg in orange juice if it is strained and they are not told the egg is there.

Continued hot applications will often give more relief to a hemorrhoid case than the usual suppositories, without the after effect.

A hot foot-bath and vigorous rubbing of the entire scalp will relieve a nervous headache.

The sick room is unfortunately too often a general sitting-room. To insure the patient plenty of fresh air, it is not enough to keep one window open a little way. Frequently, during the day, and always before bedtime, cover the patient well, and open all the windows. It is not only good for the patient, but the nurse as well, and, incidentally, makes the room uncomfortable for the family for the time being.

A whalebone, bent so that it will reach far back. is good for cleansing the tongue of a typhoid fever patient.

At a time of great weakness to look at brightly coloured flowers is like looking at a strong light. Flowers and plants of delicate shades and mild fragrance should be selected for the days following an operation.

When one has a faceache and takes a hot-water bag to bed it can be kept from slipping about by putting it between the pillow and its outer case.

In caring for a patient whose eyes are inflamed no dry cotton should be brought near the face, as the fine, almost invisible fuzz which floats in the air tends to aggravate and increase the inflammation. Wet cotton may be used for irrigation, or better, the solution can be poured from a small open-mouthed bottle. Squares of soft linen should be used in place of the dry-cotton sponges.

If a nurse is not needed for constant watching, but must be awake at certain hours to give treatments or medicine, an alarm clock, set for the hour, can be put under her pillow. Its muffled sound will not disturb anyone else, but will rouse her on time. The key to the alarm should be turned only once or twice.

In fumigating a room glycerine can be used, instead of paste, for fastening strips of paper over the cracks of doors. Its advantage is that it does not injure the woodwork and is easily removed. Its disadvantage is that it will last only from six to nine hours. An unperforated roll of toilet paper is convenient to use for cutting strips.

For bluish spots on the skin, likely to develop into bed-sores, use tincture of myrrh. While this is

still damp apply oxide of zinc powder, enough to form a paste or plaster over the spot. In an hour or two the skin begins to look more natural. Such an application made once a day is usually sufficient.

### The Clothes Brush.

The brushing of dusty clothes in the living rooms of the household is, says the *Lancet*, opposed to cleanly sentiment, apart altogether from the evil to health which, as the bacteriology of dust distinctly indicates, might easily be caused by the process. The imagination does not require to be stretched very far to realise that the clothes brush might be easily responsible for the dissemination of disease. Dust is rarely, if ever, free from micro-organisms and amongst them pathogenic entities have been recognised. Dust is, in fact, an enemy of the human race, a vehicle of disease, and should everywhere and on every occasion, however trifling, be prevented as far as means can be employed to that end. The clothes brush is a vigorous dust-producing agent and since its application is indispensable it should be used in a manner as far as possible consistent with hygienic requirements. Clothes, of course, must be brushed just as carpets must be beaten but both processes create a nuisance which is different not in kind but only in degree. Just, therefore, as there are grounds reserved for the beating of carpets remote, as they should be, from human habitation, so also ought there to be in a household conducted on hygienic lines a special room relegated to the brushing of clothes. Enthusiastic sanitary reformers would, no doubt, suggest that provision might also be made for trapping the dust by some such simple measure as suspending a damp sheet across the room. The daily clothes have a large capacity and a singular affinity for dust which may contain the seeds of a common cold or a sore throat, or even of blood poisoning and tetanus, so that the suggestion that the clothes brush should be handled in a less indiscriminate way than is usually the case can hardly be regarded as chimerical. If dust has been proved to be pathogenic the scattering of it broadcast by means of the clothes brush must be a violation of hygienic principles. The brushing of clothes is, in fact, a clumsy and an insanitary procedure which might with advantage be superseded by some more effectual and less offensive method. The use of some kind of vacuum brush for the purpose would, sanitarily speaking, be ideal.

### Relief from Flies and Mosquitoes.

It is not known to all nurses, says a writer in the *Hospital Review*, that flies and mosquitoes hate the smell of lavender. In my nursing I managed to secure sleep for a fly-tormented patient in the following simple way:—Pour into an atomiser a teaspoonful of oil of lavender, add to this as much alcohol as will make a saturated solution. Lightly spray a pillow with this, and place it under the patient's head. If the flies are very bad, cover the eyes and nose and spray hair, night dress, and bed clothes. Not a fly will come around while the odour is perceptible.

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