

### Practical Points.

#### The "Equipoise" Couch.

By command of the Queen, an "Equipoise" couch has been sent to Buckingham Palace for Her Majesty's inspection. This newly invented couch, made by the "Equipoise" Couch Co., of Ashford, permits of a ready change to any position from the recumbent to a sitting, without the slightest effort or the use of mechanism; or it can be rigidly locked until a fresh pose is desired. Bedsteads on this principle have already been adopted by some of the large London hospitals, giving extra comfort to the patients, and saving their nurses the exertion of heavy lifting. Her Majesty is well known to be deeply interested in all that tends to the amelioration of sick people.

#### Patent Bath Valves.

Messrs. Doulton and Co., Limited, have supplied amongst other fittings for the Royal Victoria Newcastle-on-Tyne Infirmary special bath valves and bed pan sinks. A short description of these may be of interest.

The valves are their patent mixing valves in gun-metal with removable keys, and with inlet to discharge through side of bath. They are arranged so that the water can be delivered at any temperature by a slight movement of the hand. It is impossible to turn on the hot water first, the valve giving first cold and then tepid, and this is a safeguard against scalding.

There are also a large number of special Bed Pan Sinks with a Scalding Sink and Drainer combined. These are made in white glazed fireclay and are fixed on cantilevers. The Bed Pan Sink has a rising jet for the Bed Pans and a spray for the Urine Bottles. These are connected by copper pipes to hot and cold screw-down valves. The Sink itself is flushed by a vitreous enamelled syphon cistern.

#### The Sterilisation of Drinking Water by Iodine.

Messrs. Evans, Sons, Lescher, and Webb, of 60, Bartholomew Close, London, E.C., can supply, says the *Lancet*, a set of tablets suitable for rapidly sterilising drinking water by means of iodine. There are three tablets in all. Tablet A contains potassic iodide and iodate, tablet B citric acid, and tablet C sodium sulphite. Tablets A and B are first dissolved together in an ounce of water and the result is a solution of iodine which is added to four gallons of water, the whole being well stirred. The sterilisation of the water is thus effected and the next step is to remove the iodine, which is readily done by adding a tablet C. The salts left in the water are, of course, iodide and citrate of potassium and sodium sulphate, but the total original ingredients added to four gallons of water only weigh five and a half grains. They cannot be detected by the palate and the water so treated has a perfectly fresh taste. Bacteriological experiments have proved the efficacy of this simple and quick method and excellent results have accrued from the use of these tablets during the prevalence of water-borne disease in India.

### Legal Matters.

#### A NURSE'S LIBEL ACTION.

At the Lincoln Assizes last week, before Mr. Justice Walton, Nurse Elizabeth Evelyn Capper, of the Worthing Institute, sought to recover £500 damages from the Lincoln Corporation and Miss Bromhead, of the Nursing Institute, Lincoln, for alleged libel.

On behalf of the plaintiff it was stated that she, along with other nurses, was engaged to assist in the nursing at Lincoln during the typhoid epidemic. Nurse Jessica, a particular friend of hers, took the fever, and Nurse Muriel and plaintiff were appointed to nurse her. The whole of the nursing arrangements were at that time being supervised for the Corporation by Miss Bromhead. Plaintiff and Nurse Muriel became alarmed at the condition of their patient, and called in another doctor: Miss Bromhead, in a letter, objected to this being done without authorisation, and made a change in the nursing arrangements. Plaintiff declined to fall in with these arrangements, which in the interest of the patient she thought undesirable. The alleged libel was contained in a letter by Miss Bromhead to Miss Duncan, by whom plaintiff was employed, in which she accused plaintiff of insubordinate conduct. Statements made in this and other letters as to plaintiff's conduct were, it was urged, liable to damage her professional reputation.

In the course of her evidence the plaintiff (Nurse Evelyn) admitted that she refused to go on night duty, or to make any change, when Miss Bromhead said she was to change duty, and Nurse Muriel was to leave.

Miss Henrietta Bromhead, the defendant, said she believed both nurses were insubordinate when she wrote to that effect. Nurse Evelyn was a good nurse. What she imputed to her was insubordination. She certainly bore no ill feeling towards her.

On the second day of the trial the counsel for the plaintiff said they had been able to come to terms which he thought would be satisfactory to his client. Counsel for Miss Bromhead withdrew all charges and imputations against Nurse Evelyn, and therefore the plaintiff was entirely re-instated in her character. On behalf of the plaintiff he withdrew any imputation that was made against Miss Bromhead. As to the Corporation, the action against them arose through what plaintiff considered to be the action of Miss Bromhead, and plaintiff had no objection to the Corporation having judgment in the matter, which they consented to take without costs.

The Judge said it was a very proper settlement. He would say plainly that he heard nothing the previous day which seemed to justify any kind of reflection or imputation upon Miss Bromhead, or the spirit in which she carried on a most useful and charitable work. Nor did he hear anything to justify any imputation or reflection upon Nurse Evelyn's qualifications, or which reflected upon her conduct. She did nothing that was open to criticism.

In our opinion, the whole trouble arose by placing the supervision of professional nursing in the hands of an untrained, though, no doubt, estimable lady. The nurses resented it, and friction was the result.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)