

## The Hospital World.

### GLASS CUBICLE WARDS AT THE SOUTH-WESTERN FEVER HOSPITAL, STOCKWELL.

Having recently seen the glass wards at the Pasteur Hospital at Paris, we were naturally anxious to compare them with the new arrangements made at the South-Western Fever Hospital at Stockwell, under the direction of Dr. F. Foord Caiger, the progressive Medical Superintendent, whereby two large wards, originally containing 18 beds, have been converted into 16 cubicles by glass partitions framed in iron, reaching to a height of seven feet above the floor level, to supplement the existing isolation accommodation.

By the courtesy of Dr. Caiger, we spent a most instructive hour at the South-Western on Monday, and left the hospital realising that in the care of infectious fevers, and, indeed, in the treatment of many other diseases, the glass cubicle may play in the future a most important part in hospital construction.

The South-Western Hospital has been built quite a number of years, and yet it is of excellent design. The beautiful wards, which contain the glass divisions, are painted an exquisite shade of green, the teak floors highly polished, and the bath rooms and lavatories branching off in the centre of the ward, instead of at the end. The cubicles, which are composed of very large sheets of glass, so that the patients are always visible to one another and the nurse, give an impression of space. The actual floor space per bed is 175 square feet, and of this 120 square feet are enclosed within the cubicle. Every cubicle is furnished with a fixed basin, the waste pipe from which is carried through the wall, and over it is fixed a tepid spray worked by a pedal action. A white painted bed (made up with the whitest and most beautifully laundered linen we ever saw), a chair, a neatly arranged locker, with movable glass top, containing syringes, and spatula in one division, and toilet necessities in the other, furnished the little glass houses, and as the ward was ventilated as a whole by means of large fan lights placed above the windows, the partitions are so disposed as to provide each cubicle with a separate window.

Separate overalls are hung in each of the cubicles, which are worn by the medical and nursing staff when attending to that particular patient; while a sterilised towel hung in proximity to the spray affords convenient opportunity for ablution of the hands immediately before leaving the cubicle.

A bathroom attached to each of the wards is furnished with a portable enamelled iron bath, which can easily be run into the cubicles,

while a gas heated copper steriliser, furnished with a hot water supply and a controllable waste, provides facilities for sterilising every article which has been used for the patient's treatment.

In the scullery attached to the ward is a second steriliser of larger size for the disinfection of the plates, mugs, knives, forks, and spoons, etc., after they have been removed from the cubicles.

It is believed that for certain cases, sufficient protection is furnished by the relative isolation afforded by cubicles, provided scrupulous care is exercised by the attendants both medical and nursing, who are entrusted with their administration. The principle underlying the system is, of course, "aseptic" in its conception.

By means of the cubicles now installed it is hoped that in each of the two wards, it will be possible to provide the manifest advantages of separate and individual isolation for 18 patients (16 in the ward, and 2 in an adjoining room), at an expenditure of five, or, at most, six, nurses, both day and night staff inclusive. This should represent a material economy in the cost of isolation.

For the present, the cubicles are to be exclusively utilised for the temporary isolation of doubtful or anomalous cases, and for certain recognised attacks which are unattended with a high degree of infectivity.

A wardmaid is responsible for keeping the wonderful supply of glass clean. She also washes the floor with a solution of formaldehyde, after which it is highly polished, a new type of weighted broom, weighing about 30lbs., being used for the purpose.

The new isolation system has been in working order for about three months, and Dr. Caiger expressed himself highly satisfied so far with the results. The nurses are, of course, immensely interested in doing their important part, gathering evidence as to its efficacy, and no doubt after a year's fair trial, statistics will be to hand proving whether or not such a scheme of isolation can be employed with certain safety to the patient.

Medical science is always going ahead. A few years ago it would have been thought most culpable to discharge "scarlet" still peeling, by some miraculous calculation infection had been declared centred in the loose cuticle. Now medical science has demonstrated that these flying flakes may be absolutely harmless, the "scarlet" patient continuing to peel after the infectious period has passed.

We saw and heard many other interesting things at the "South-Western," and have never visited a better kept hospital. The ex-

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