

Registry books, giving full information regarding all patients, are to be kept in private hospitals, and provision is made for their official inspection. Managers are required to give notice of certain diseases when they occur in their hospitals, and to supply the Neglected Children's Department with information regarding the births of illegitimate children.

The provisions of the Bill will not apply to—

- (1) Any institution incorporated under Part I. of the Hospitals and Charities Act, 1890.
- (2) Any of the institutions referred to in Part II. of the Hospitals and Charities Act, 1890.
- (3) Any hospital or temporary place for the reception of the sick provided by the Council of any municipality, or in default of a Council by the Board, pursuant to the provisions of Sections 153 and 154 of the Health Act, 1890.
- (4) Any hospital, asylum, or other institution constructed, erected, established, provided, or maintained by the Council of any municipality.
- (5) Any hospital for the insane or hospital or asylum or receiving-house or receiving-ward or licensed house within the meaning of the Lunacy Acts, or any house in which a patient may reside and board, pursuant to the provisions of the Lunacy Acts.
- (6) Any institution licensed or established under the Inebriates Act, 1904.
- (7) The Talbot Colony for Epileptics.
- (8) Any institution or hospital supported wholly or in part by or receiving aid from the State.

Practical Points.

From the "International Hospital Record."

Talcum, burnt flour, Fuller's earth, starch, and lycopodium are good drying powders.

A hot water bag placed at the patient's feet during a cold bath is a comfort and does not affect the fever.

When it is not convenient to warm the bed-pan, a newspaper may be used to cover it by making an opening to fit over the spout, and a larger opening over the middle of the pan.

If the stems of flowers are cut under water they will keep fresh better, because the stalks will fill with water instead of air.

A small cream pitcher is a good substitute for a patent feeder.

To Sterilise a Thermometer.

Up to the present, according to the *Medical Council*, the best, as well as the most harmless, agent for sterilising the thermometer is a 2 to 4 per cent. solution of Chinisol.

To Make Mattresses Handy.

Sew handles on mattresses, two on each side and one on each end. Then they can be moved and lifted very easily. The handles may be made of canvas or any stout material.

Legal Matters.

THE URGENT NEED FOR STATE REGISTRATION.

It would be hard to find two cases which are a stronger plea for State Registration of Trained Nurses, from quite different standpoints, than two which have recently had publicity through the law courts.

ABBOTT AND WIFE V. RYALL.

One which we reported last week was a case in which negligence, of which he was exonerated, was alleged against a surgeon.

According to the eminent surgeons who gave evidence at the hearing of the case, the operation was so critical that the only wonder was that the patient escaped with her life, and the surgeon himself stated, according to the *British Medical Journal* report (which is fuller than that of the *Times*, for which reason we refer to it again), that he left a swab in the intestine, and that he gave instructions to the head nurse that there was a drain in the vagina, and "a swab in the bowel, which had to be removed. He asked her to particularly attend to these matters. He went down a week later, and had a conversation with the head nurse, who assured him that the drain and swab had come away."

The nurse, Mrs. J. E. Powell, also stated that she had received the above instructions, "two days after the operation she administered an enema, on Dr. Fairweather's instructions. Remembering what the defendant had said, she made it extra large. It consisted of water and 9 oz. of olive oil. The result appeared to be very satisfactory. A hard lump came away, which appeared to her to be the swab. The patient had not had much solid food. A week after the operation, when Mr. Ryall came to remove the stitches, she told him about the motion and that the swab had come away. She did not, however, strain the motion, although she knew now she ought to have done so."

Later in her evidence, Mrs. Powell said that another nurse was present, but "she was not efficient."

Mr. F. E. Smith, K.C., counsel for the plaintiff, said: "You have no right to say that, but as you say it I must ask you why was she incompetent," to which Mrs. Powell replied: "I am sorry to have to say it, but I asked her to fill a hot water bottle twenty minutes before the operation, and she put it into the patient's bed without a stopper."

Surely if patients are to be supplied with the competent nursing for which they pay, it is evident from the foregoing details that the professional education of nurses must be regulated, and their knowledge and practical skill tested, by a central expert authority before they are guaranteed as trained nurses.

THEFTS FROM PATIENTS.

The second case is of an entirely different character. It is not a question of educational standards, but concerns the career of Annie Twyman, and affords strong evidence of the urgent need for State Registration.

At the Wood Green Police Court recently, this woman (under police supervision) was charged with

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)