

PRACTICAL POINTS.

THE PROBLEM OF BED PAN COVERS.

We quote the following interesting correspondence from *The Modern Hospital* :—

A SYMPOSIUM.

So fundamental and apparently simple a problem as a covering for bed pans in transit has not yet been solved. A number of inquiries have recently come to *The Modern Hospital*, asking about a bed pan cover that would meet all the requirements, and the subject was deemed of sufficient importance to justify a little symposium.

We, therefore, sent out inquiries to a few good hospitals, and below are published some of the replies, which, by the way, are not very satisfying.

It is recognised that the following conditions must be met in a bed pan cover :

1. It must be sterilizable.
2. It must be practically noiseless.
3. In proportion as it prevents the diffusion of odours along corridors, it will be the more acceptable.
4. It must be always available; hence must be of such physical character that it can be kept nearby, but out of the way.
5. It must not be unsightly.
6. It must be easily carried and handled by the nurse, along with the pan itself.

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL.

We have been unable to find a suitable bed pan cover. We have used towels and rubber dams stretched over wire frames and glued on. These were quiet, but not durable and not very sanitary. Recently we have been using a moulded metal cover, nickel plated. These are easily kept cleaned, but they are noisy if dropped, and rattle. We should like to hear what others use.

JOSEPH B. HOWLAND,
Asst. Administrator.

THE ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL.

We use in this hospital a square piece of muslin for bed pan covering, marked and laid aside for this special purpose.

CHAS. B. GRIMSHAW,
Superintendent.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL.

Your letter in regard to transporting bed pans from the service rooms to the patients' rooms has been referred to me. I would say that we cover them with a square of ticking. I have never seen a metal box cover, but have had suggestions from physicians to that effect. However, I believe it would be noisy and very difficult to keep such a vessel sweet and clean. I would be glad to hear of any suggestions.

JESSIE J. TURNBULL,
Directress of Nurses.

THE SOCIETY OF THE NEW YORK HOSPITAL.

We make bed pan covers of cotton cloth. They are about a yard square, and have a special mark to identify them. We have used this method for a great many years.

THOMAS HOWELL,
Superintendent.

PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL OF CHICAGO.

For bed pan covers we use an 18 by 24 inch denim or ticking cover, at a cost of 1½¢ when using new material, and only the cost of the labour when using old material. The advantages are: cheapness, as they can be made mostly from old material; cleanliness, as they can be laundered daily; convenient for the nurses to handle, and for this reason they always use them; they are light and noiseless, and when kept clean they are not unsightly.

ASA BACON,
Superintendent.

PHILADELPHIA GENERAL HOSPITAL.

In the Philadelphia General Hospital we have squares of rubber similar to that used in making rubber blankets, which are of sufficient size to enable the nurse to take hold of both sides of the bed pan, thus insuring that the cover will be kept in place.

The objection, it seems, to the metal covering would be the inability to procure a tight-fitting cover. It might be possible to secure a pliable metal cover which would slide in a groove, somewhat similar to the doors of an old-fashioned heater.

It would be interesting to read the opinions of others on this subject.

J. C. DOANE,
Chief Resident Physician.

UNION BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION HOSPITAL.

The question of the covering and protection of bed pans is one we feel has never yet been satisfactorily solved, and I shall be among the most grateful if you succeed in getting good suggestions.

We find that the heavy square of "factory" we now use (a *clean* one each time) is fairly satisfactory, as our distances are not great. The covers must be sufficiently large to envelop the pan entirely, and in case of very strong odours, a square of rubber sheeting is sometimes added.

Sorry not to be able to give you something better.

IDA M. BARRETT,
Superintendent.

ST. BARNABAS HOSPITAL.

In our old hospital building we are still using thick muslin covers, made especially for them, but in our large, new pavilion I designed the rooms so that between each two there is a toilet and bath, also the same off each ward, so that the sad spectacle of pans being conveyed through the halls has been eliminated; were I designing a medical wing I would place a sufficient number

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