

treatment in England, and in my opinion is productive in many cases of the greatest harm."

CROTONS.

While realizing the need of aperients for insane patients Dr. Lomax is of opinion that they should be carefully prescribed. "I have," says Dr. Lomax a very grave indictment to bring against the medical usage of most public asylums in this matter. When I first took office I found the use of croton-oil almost universal. This powerful purgative was only dispensed in two minimis capsules (a very strong dose), and not a day passed without the attendants specifying a certain number of cases in each ward that required 'crotons.' In some cases the patients were constipated and really needed an aperient; in most they were simply troublesome or refractory, and this was the recognised method of 'taming' them or keeping them quiet. . . . This routine employment of croton oil as a means of maintaining order is sheer cruelty, and to be sternly deprecated. . . . I have little doubt in my own mind that it is the indirect cause of more cases of 'colitis,' or 'asylum dysentery' than is ever suspected. 'Asylum dysentery,' of course is due to a specific organism, but it needs a favourable soil to thrive in, and what more favourable soil for its reception and transmission can be imagined than a bowel weakened and inflamed by constant and drastic purgation? The bowels, after a strong croton purge, may be opened ten or twenty times. Often there is severe griping as well, and the patient may be violently sick. The pulse rate is markedly lowered, feeble cases may become blue and cyanotic, and may even faint. . . . The effects are not simply those of purging, the bowels are not merely opened, they are scoured out, and, as the strips of mucus found and the stools testify, not only scoured but flayed."

(To be concluded.)

PRACTICAL POINTS.

FIVE HOURS' IRONING FOR A PENNY.

Now that so many people have a number of small articles washed at home, ironing day becomes a matter of importance. The British Commercial Gas Association, 30, Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1, draws attention in this connection to the deservedly popular internally-heated gas iron.

With the old-fashioned flat iron a considerable amount of time was wasted in heating, and when the iron was heated it was often found to be too hot for the work on which it was to be used. Moreover, soot and dirt from the iron often caused soiled linen, and great care had to be exercised in cleaning the face of the iron each time to prevent this possibility.

All of these drawbacks disappear when the internally-heated gas iron is used. Its brightly polished exterior is always perfectly clean, and it glides with ease over the material. The gas jets are actually inside the iron itself, the supply of gas being brought to the iron by means of a

small flexible tube connected to the nearest gas "point" in the room. This tube is quite light and does not in any way interfere with the ironing operation. The gas is regulated by a tap on the iron itself so that it can be turned on full when the article has to be ironed wet, or lowered considerably when silk blouses and other apparel requiring a cool iron are being dealt with.

The gas iron saves all the labour entailed in running to and from the fire in order to re-heat the iron, and it gives off no smell. It is extremely economical in its consumption of gas. Ironing can be done with it for slightly under a farthing per hour, as reckoned at the average price of gas in the country to-day; that is to say, five hours' ironing will cost about one penny for gas. The price of an efficient and reliable gas iron is within the reach of the poorest artisan.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

It is most disappointing to women that after all the work that has been put into the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, and the Guardianship of Infants Bill, and all the support they have received from both men's and women's organisations that they should fail to pass into law. The former, though technically thrown out in the Lords, was really wrecked in the House of Commons by the introduction of a wrecking amendment by a group of members hostile to the Bill. The latter was not a controversial bill and it seemed fairly sure that it would pass as a non-contentious measure, but Sir Frederick Banbury managed to convert it into a technically contentious measure by introducing some trivial amendments, and so it could not be discussed after 11 o'clock. The system of government which permits such senseless blocking is really scandalous. No class suffered more from it than the nurses when the Bill for their registration was before Parliament; but the tactics they adopted of lobbying, not only by the officials of organisations but by the rank-and-file, showed their strong feeling, and made a great impression.

Women must be more emphatic in dealing with politicians, and it is high time Sir Frederick Banbury was personally picketed and told some home truths. Too much sweetness in politics is a mistake. Let other women follow the nurses' outspoken policy.

It would be well with the nation if all its members showed as patriotic and independent a spirit as an elderly mill worker in Dundee who refused to draw the unemployment dole, and between £7 and £8 accumulated to her credit, on the ground that it was improper for her to take such a sum when the State is so short of money.

When her savings were exhausted her friends persuaded her to draw the money, but only on condition that the Labour Exchange accepts her I.O.U., and she is determined to refund the money when she once more obtains work.

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