erroneously imagined that the Bill applied not merely to the sale of goods but to machinery and factories. A few days before this debate Denmark adopted the metric system for all purposes, so now England and Russia alone stand aloof in Europe.

All Southern and Central America have followed the example of Europe and the United States have commenced by making this system compulsory for electric measures, also in the medical department of the army, the navy, and public health. It is also obligatory for all purposes in Porto Rico and the Philippines.

Official reports show that this change has been wholly beneficial in the United States, even where civilians experienced only in the old system were hastily brought into the army and navy medical services during the recent war with Spain. The colonies have urged Great Britain to join them in the reform and will probably act alone, if necessary, as New Zealand has already legislated on the subject. As regards the medical services of the army and navy in this country Government could take immediate action without reference to Parliament and with the same advantages which followed in the United States. The result would probably encourage concerted voluntary action among medical men in civil life who might collect and record the names of adherents through a central committee. A commencement of metric practice might be delayed till a convenient percentage of names in any district or throughout the country were recorded.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

July 22nd, 1907.

T.

CERTIFYING SURGEONS AND THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT, 1906.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Having just received from the Home Office documents respecting the duties and remuneration of certifying surgeons under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, I shall be glad to know the opinion of certifying surgeons as to whether they consider the fees are such as should be accepted by self-respecting medical men and, if not, what steps can be taken in the matter. In the circular from the Home Office it points out that "the certificates are legal documents which will require great care in completion." I gather the fee for this legal document is *one shilling*, which includes a responsible and skilled examination, but the details are chiefly given in Section 8 and Sub-section 3 of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

July 16th, 1907.

CERTIFYING SURGEON.

* * We comment upon the matter in another column.—
ED. L.

POPLAR AND STEPNEY SICK ASYLUM DISTRICT.—

The report of the managers of the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum District for the year ending Lady-day, 1907, shows that the total number of patients in the various asylums of the district at the close of the period with which the report deals was 926. In the Bromley asylum the patients from Poplar suffering from cancer of various regions numbered 44, while patients from Stepney suffering from the same disease numbered 20. During the year 18 nurses presented themselves for, and successfully passed, the examination in sick cookery in connexion with the cookery classes held under the auspices of the Technical Education Board of the London County Council. The medical superintendent reports that the first year's working of the new system under which case papers were substituted for the cumbersome system of medical relief books has been a great improvement upon the old method. Under an Order issued by the Local Government Board in 1905 the medical superintendent has the option of either having the case paper, upon which appear the diet, medicine, history, and all information regarding the patient, hung by the bedside, or else of having in addition to the case paper a bed card upon which is written by the nurse the diet prescribed for the patient, together with other useful information. The latter of these alternatives was chosen in the present instance and the results have proved very satisfactory. The case papers, which are kept under lock and key, have been specially useful in cases where patients previously treated present themselves for readmission.

THE IRISH INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL SANITARY COMMISSIONER.)

Dublin, July 13th, 1907.

THOUGH the Dublin exhibition is called the Irish International Exhibition the international element is very small and unimportant. On the other hand, as Ireland is not a populous or industrial or wealthy country it naturally follows that the Irish exhibits are also somewhat poor. They are, nevertheless, interesting; they testify that efforts are being made and that these might be far more successful if the Irish could only receive a more business-like education and acquire greater technical knowledge. These considerations have a considerable bearing on the health and vitality of the race, particularly as such industrial efforts as have been made relate in the main to the production of food and of clothing. However, the most notable Irish industries have a building to themselves on one side of the grounds and it is the Central Palace that seems the most important and first attracts the visitor, if for no other reason than that it has been made the principal subject of the illustrated advertisements. Yet the middle of this building is a huge sort of meeting place and lounge where there are but few exhibits. The four wings, however, of this the main structure are well filled. Penetrating first the north wing I found a considerable amount of Irish and other furniture. The idea of sanitary furniture constructed for its own sake or specially for use in the hotels of the Touring Club and which was such an interesting feature at the Milan Exhibition last year has not yet travelled so far as Dublin. Nevertheless, as we more clearly understand the causes of the spread of disease something approximating to aseptic furniture will become more and more appreciated, especially in hotels and places frequented by a great variety of people. At several exhibitions I have noticed furniture of this description, but I found none at Dublin.

In the east wing there were a great display of whiskies and notably a huge pot-still belonging to the firm of John Power and Son which was established in Dublin in 1791. The statement made is that this whisky "is distilled in a pot-still from the wash derived from the fermented worts of home-grown malted and unmalted barley, with wheat and oats in small proportion." Close by, and as if suggesting an antidote, Augustine Thwaites has a model of the quaint little old house where in 1773 soda water was first made. In the window there is the old ledger opened at the page where the account was kept of the amount of soda water supplied to His Majesty George IV. Then again, likewise surrounded by other whisky exhibits, I found Wheatley's non-intoxicants, hop-bitters, &c. These were bottled and looked very much like ordinary ales. Here, also, were numerous tobacco exhibits, and tobacco is often as injurious, when smoked in excess, as beer, but this does not prevent many total abstainers from suffering the evil effects of tobacco.

In the south wing there were more tobaccos and more mineral waters, including the French Perrier water. Then there were meat preparations, such as Bovril soup and Brand's various delicacies and invalid foods. Levers' soaps, Price's patent candles, and Fry's chocolates came next, though it is difficult to see what connexion there can be between them. In the same wing Philip Harris and Co. of Dublin exhibit their scientific instruments, scales, thermometers, and electrical and chemical appliances of all sorts. As scientific exhibitors they would be quite isolated but for the proximity of John Clark and Co. of Dublin and Belfast who display surgical instruments, orthopaedic appliances, hospital furniture, &c. As special to Ireland there are Irish linen bandages, the edges of which are woven so that they are very durable. The same firm has a high-pressure steam steriliser consisting of double copper cylinders and an outside jacket of Russian steel. It condenses its own steam and a pressure of from 15 to 40 pounds can be obtained according to the manner in which the safety valve is regulated. These are the only sterilisers made in Ireland and are becoming more and more an article of general use.

The west wing is mainly devoted to clothing. There are Killarney rugs and cloth made of pure wool, doubtless very warm and healthy to wear, but there is no clothing that professes to be sanitary clothing and even the non-inflammable flannelette, seen at almost all exhibitions, is not in evidence