

## THE INSURANCE BILL AND THE HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of THE HOSPITAL.

DEAR SIR,—It seems almost useless to repeat the apprehension of all hospital authorities of the disastrous risk of the National Insurance Bill as at present drawn, unless some of the amendments which have been passed *en bloc* on the report stage, have entirely altered this aspect of the Bill. That the very existence of voluntary hospitals is jeopardised seems to be clear, unless the very sweeping suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself is to be adopted—that in future no insured person can be received at a voluntary hospital—and this seems to be extremely hard on the working classes, who will have compulsorily to be insured and will then not be provided for in any really serious condition. That the Bill may have some effect in enabling hospitals to decline a number of applicants in the out-patient department seems probable, but on the other hand the pressure on the beds will increase rather than diminish, and for provincial hospitals

at any rate the freedom with which serious cases have been admitted must be restricted.

It will clearly be difficult for hospital committees to reconcile the treatment of insured persons under a State scheme, with the present fundamental principle of treating in voluntary hospitals those who are unable to provide the necessary treatment, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer's advice is generally accepted in this matter, the effect on the contributions of the well-to-do and philanthropic public must be great, while the large mass of contributors of one and two guineas a year will naturally hesitate in view of the increased amount they would have to pay for their servants or other employés.

If some 30 per cent. of the present income (as is estimated) may be affected, it must be a very serious question as to the maintenance of the full number of beds, for which at present the income is not sufficient.—Yours truly,

HOWARD J. COLLINS

General Hospital, Birmingham. (House Governor).  
December 5.

## HOW TO AMEND THE INSURANCE BILL.

THIS Bill, as submitted to the House of Lords, had several changes in the numbering of its clauses. We therefore find it necessary, to avoid confusion, to republish from pages 253 and 254 of our last issue the suggested amendments to the Bill which now affect the various clauses as follows:—

The suggested amendments to the Bill are as follows:—

Clause 8, section (1) (b): treatment in hospitals in addition to sanatoria, accidents in addition to disease, and institutional benefit are included.

Clause 10, section (1), line 5: institutional benefit is substituted for sanatorium benefit, and also in line 9.

Clause 12, section (2) (b), line 2: provision is made for the addition of the word "hospital" after the word "sanatorium"; and in the same clause, section (c), line 2, after the word "inmate," the following words are added: "otherwise than as a person in receipt of institutional benefit."

Clause 14, section (1), line 5, "institutional" is substituted for "sanatorium" benefits.

Clause 16, section (1), line 1, "institutional" is substituted for "sanatorium" benefit; and in (1) (a), line 2, after the words "such disease" the words "or accident," and line 3, after the word "sanatoria" the word "hospitals" are inserted. In line 5 (1) (a), after the word "sanatoria" the word "hospitals" is inserted. In the same clause, section (1) (b), line 2, the word "hospitals" is inserted after the word "sanatoria." In the same clause, section (2), line 2, the word "sanatorium" is struck out and the word "institutional" is inserted. In section (3) of the same clause the word "sanatorium" is struck out and the word "institutional" inserted. At the end of this section the following words are added: "Provided that, where a duly qualified member of the medical staff of any such hospital as aforesaid certifies that an insured person is in urgent need of admission to such hospital, such certificate shall have the same validity, so far as regards the admission and subsequent treatment of

such person, as a recommendation by the local Health Committee."

In the same clause, section (4), line 2, substitute the word "institutional" for the word "sanatorium," and in line 4 insert the word "hospital" after the words "any sanatorium."

Clause 20, lines 3 and 4, after the words "think fit," delete the following words "to hospitals and other charitable institutions, or."

The suggested new sub-section would now be added to clause 63 and constitute a new sub-section (5).

## Appointments.

DR. JOHN JAMES MARTIN has been appointed assistant medical officer to the Portsmouth Parish Infirmary.

MR. E. WILMOT SMERDON, M.B., Ch.B., has been appointed assistant house surgeon to the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary.

MR. W. J. CARR, B.A. Cantab, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., has been appointed house physician at the Evelina Hospital for Sick Children.

MR. A. J. O. WIGMORE, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.B. Bristol, Ch.B., has been appointed assistant house surgeon at the East Sussex Hospital, Hastings.

## Obituary.

THE death is announced as having occurred on the 6th inst., at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, of Dr. Norman Campbell Young, M.B., Ch.M., son of the late Dr. Peter Young, of Edinburgh.

SURGEON-GENERAL ROBERT WYATT MEADOWS, M.D., has died at Saltash, Cornwall, in his seventy-eighth year. He obtained a commission as Assistant Surgeon in 1854, and served in the Crimean War, being present at Inkerman and Sebastopol. He also went through the Afghan War of 1879, and was mentioned in dispatches. He became Surgeon-General in 1889. He was a well-known figure in the little town on the banks of the River Tamar, where his son, Dr. R. Thornton Meadows, is a prominent practitioner.