

all who have any knowledge of the subject, or the slightest experience of what Trained Nursing is, and what it effects in cases of illness or injury, it must be recognised that the feeling to which this lady gave expression, is still widely prevalent. And if this be so, amongst persons who are presumably well educated, who, it may be assumed, have some little acquaintance with what illness implies, it follows that with a less knowledge, such as may reasonably be expected from persons of lower education and status, the difficulties in the way of those who advocate improvements in workhouse Infirmaries will be immensely increased. There is the more reason to fear this result, and that parsimony will be shown in the Nursing department of our Workhouse Infirmaries still more in the future than has been the case in the past, because expenditure in this direction makes so little apparent show, although it spells comfort, and, in many cases, safety to sick paupers.

The common belief is that the effect of the Parish Councils' Bill will be to cause an immense increase in the rates, and it may be confidently expected from the experience of similar legislation that such will be the case, especially in view of the financial results which have ensued upon the establishment of County Councils. We are led then by similar reasoning from analogy to believe that the increase of expenditure will take place upon schemes which are designated under the generic term of "democratic"; that is to say, schemes which will make a great outward show, and which will be carried out at the expense of the many for the fancied or real benefit of the few. It will, doubtless, be the noisy and the clamorous sections upon whom the ratepayer's money will be most freely spent, and we cannot but feel that inasmuch as the sick in our Workhouse Infirmaries can fall under neither of these designations, that they and their wants are likely to be overlooked and neglected. In fact, we cannot but believe that the Parish Councils' Bill may prove hereafter to have the most serious results upon the welfare and success of medical charities, because while, on the one hand, we fear that increased difficulty will be experienced in the execution of wise and liberal reforms in the Nursing Departments, which are under the Poor Law; so, on the other hand, by the increased burdens which it will throw upon the already overburdened ratepayers of large towns, it may very effectually obstruct the flow of voluntary help toward the large General and Special Hospitals which are solely dependent upon such charitable aid for their continued existence. We treat this matter, as we treat all political questions, from no narrow party standpoint, but solely as they affect the interests of the profession which we represent. And, as we shall hope to show, from time to time hereafter, the provisions of the new Local Government Act must have a very wide-reaching effect upon the management of the Poor Law, and may also affect the voluntary, Hospitals.

ANTI-VIVISECTION.

An active correspondence has been proceeding upon some excellent articles which were recently published in the columns of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. We venture to congratulate our spirited and successful contemporary upon the further example which it has now given of its scientific desire for the elucidation of truth, and upon its generally progressive policy. The anti-vivisectionists, so far, are coming rather badly out of the war of words, as, indeed, has always been their fate when they were fairly brought to book for the statements which they make. One of the most crushing retorts which have been made against the anti-vivisectionists appeared in our contemporary on March 21st, in the form of a letter from "M.D.," who pointed out that a prominent official of the Anti-Vivisection Society has issued a circular letter asking for generous financial assistance to the body he represents. As an inducement to give such assistance, he quoted an experiment which he termed "a specimen of the abominable cruelties perpetrated in our laboratories." M.D., however, points out that the experiment thus described was taken from an anatomical paper, and was performed on dead carcasses, some of which, moreover, had been preserved in spirits. The only hint given of this fact by the advocate against vivisection was the statement, that "No mention was made of chloroform or anæsthetics." Everyone, except an anti-vivisectionist, whose methods of argument this excellently exemplifies, would imagine it to be somewhat difficult to administer chloroform successfully to a corpse. After this exposure, a movement which was not absolutely founded upon falsehood and fed upon misrepresentation would die a natural death.

VACCINATION.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to persuade a faddist that his views are not absolutely correct, and the anti-vaccinationists seem more impenetrable than other sections to the logic of facts or the force of arguments. It is therefore possible that upon them the strange, and to most minds most significant, occurrences which have recently taken place at Birmingham will have little or no effect. It is stated that during the recent epidemic of small-pox in that city, the Nurses at the Workhouse Infirmary and in the Workhouse were advised to undergo re-vaccination; and, with two exceptions, they wisely adopted that precautionary measure. Two Nurses, however, refused, and while all those who had been re-vaccinated, without exception, escaped the contagion, the two who had not been protected were struck down by small-pox, and, what is more, both of them died. The facts are indisputable; they by no means stand alone; they are merely the repetition of similar facts which have been observed again and again, in similar cases, in previous epidemics, and in every part of the country. But we consider that it is right to give prominence to the present instance, in view of the attempts which are being made to influence the public against the greatest protective measure known to modern medicine, by persons who apparently uphold the doctrines of Free Trade not only in matters of business but in the diffusion of disease. If such people prefer to have a loathsome disease, and go about scarred, and perhaps sightless, for the rest of their days, if they recover at all, they might please themselves were it not that they cannot do so without endangering the safety of their fellow citizens.

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