

these baths free, but the consequences following upon their administration were most disastrous; heart failure, hæmoptysis and death not unfrequently supervening. It was very difficult to prove this, however, as apparently the coroner refused to sit upon cases of small-pox, and, as a friend of Mr. Pickering was found willing to give the necessary certificates, the evil continued. (One ventures to think that had there been a *woman* coroner she would have felt it necessary to hold the inquests, notwithstanding the fact that the cases were those of small-pox, and that she would not have shrunk from this duty any more than from that of performing the last necessary offices for the dead). These baths were supposed to effect a cure in from three to nine days. They were given in courses of nine, but the patients were told that after the first bath they were free from infection. The proportion of Condy's fluid used was so large that the patients were stained a deep red colour. Another course of treatment was prescribed by "Professor Edwards" in the form of a bottle of medicine and a dozen powders. These were professedly given free, but a bill of ninepence for the medicine and a shilling for the powders usually followed after they had been taken!

It is now over three weeks since there was a fresh case of small-pox in Gloucester, so it is to be hoped that this terrible disease is at last stamped out. The inhabitants of this city have, indeed, had a severe lesson as to the necessity for vaccination, and we may hope that such a scourge may never again be possible.

That the lesson has been taken to heart is evident from the report of the Gloucester Guardians Vaccination Committee, which states that "probably no record exists of so rapid, so extensive, and so momentous a conversion on any matter not directly connected with a question of religious belief. Gloucester, which in 1892 headed the record of badly-vaccinated communities in England and Wales, showing a percentage of 86.9 of the children born during the year who were unaccounted for in the vaccination returns, is now, in regard to infantile and adult population, probably one of the best vaccinated towns in the kingdom." Another report says: "From 1873 to 1895 Gloucester was practically free from small-pox. In May of the later year a case was reported; this was followed by others at intervals, and at the end of the year a total of thirty cases had occurred. Up to that time the outbreak was well under control. Of 15,682 births in the Union from January, 1886, only 2,378 primary vaccinations could be found on the registers. The report speaks of the use of calf-lymph as having stimulated the demand for vaccination and re-vac-

nation; the effects of the extensive resort to which began to be felt in April, the high-water mark of 211 new cases being reached in the week ending April 9th.

"Repeated applications were made to the Midland Railway Company to induce the employes to follow the example of their fellow-operatives on the Great Western Railway, but an official frankly admitted, at a late stage of the epidemic, that more than 400 of the men had not been re-vaccinated. The consequence was 'that the large body of men were a standing menace to the community.' It appears that out of an estimated population in the Union of 52,000, at least 36,000 were induced to accept the protection of re-vaccination."

Owing to the impossibility of admitting more than a small proportion of the patients into Hospital, the difficulties of isolation were extreme. In some parts of the city, policemen were put on duty to keep those people in infected houses within their own doors, but, as soon as the representative of the law turned the corner of one street to parade another, the temptation to indulge in friendly intercourse with a sympathising neighbour was for the most part too great to be resisted, and the good people of Gloucester were out of their own houses and deep in the delights of a gossip on the other side of the street before many moments had elapsed.

It is to be regretted that the establishment of a roll of Nurses willing to hold themselves in readiness to nurse infectious diseases, which was urged upon the Royal British Nurses' Association by some of its most influential members, has been allowed to lapse by that body. If, in the early days of the Gloucester epidemic, a body of trained Nurses, capable of nursing the sick efficiently and carrying out regulations as to isolation effectively, had been on the spot, as they might have been, within 48 hours after the demand for them had been made, the local authorities would have been able to cope with the disease in an effectual manner in its early days, and it would probably never have spread as it unhappily did, and have taken nearly a year to stamp out. Those best able to judge were of opinion that, at a crisis such as this, an ever-generous public would not allow the body of Nurses who came to the aid of the sick and suffering in an epidemic such as that of which we have lately had an example, to be ultimately the pecuniary losers by their action, and they held, and surely rightly, the opinion that, in such circumstances as this, the proverb "*Bis dat, qui cito dat*" essentially holds good. But "he who hesitates is lost," and the Royal British Nurses' Association has, alas! once more missed its opportunity. It is to the

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