

all sides, and though we recognise the advantage which such homes, when well managed, are to the medical men of the neighbourhood, yet it must be admitted that they quite alter its character, and distinctly detract from its advantages from a residential point of view.

For instance, all proprietors of these homes are not so careful to provide their windows at the back of the house with the same charming muslin, or silk blinds—or, indeed, with *any* blinds—which ornament the front, and though personally we are inured to operations, even we prefer not to have a demonstration of this kind given publicly, and we ourselves have witnessed these operations taking place in back rooms in the vicinity. Again, the subsequent cries of a patient recovering from an anæsthetic, must surely be repugnant to any one possessed of a nervous organization, especially to one who may mistake the cause. Another point is that these homes are not restricted merely to the reception of surgical cases; but, infectious cases such as typhoid fever, diphtheria, measles, and other diseases which form a distinct danger to the community are admitted. Indeed, only the other day a lady of wide experience at the head of a private nursing institution mentioned to us that the demand for the services of private nurses for infectious cases had greatly diminished because patients suffering from these complaints were now so usually sent to public hospitals and nursing homes. It is not many years ago since the proprietor of a nursing home in the Marylebone district admitted patients suffering from scarlet fever. This was we are glad to say effectively dealt with by the sanitary authorities as a danger to the community, but the fact that the other infectious diseases which we have mentioned are imported into the Marylebone district appears to us to be one to be dealt with by the Medical Officer of Health, and to call for legislation. Otherwise these private nursing homes, which are entirely uncontrolled, and which are frequently not in professional hands and are consequently indifferently managed, may become sources of public danger.

The report of the Marylebone Medical Officer deals with another result of these homes, namely, "the litter in public streets." Portions of these streets are, this officer asserts—and we certainly can bear witness to the fact—"almost permanently covered with straw, and that apparently there does not exist sufficiently definite power to deal with the litter or straw until it becomes offensive." The fact is that a

layer of straw is laid down, a wet day comes, and what with the slush, and the traffic, the straw becomes converted into filth resembling that of a much-trodden pig-stye. A fresh supply of straw is necessary for the well-being of the invalid, and this is, therefore, laid down *over the other*, until at the end of a lengthy illness the street may be covered with layer upon layer of decomposing material. Another inconvenience is that if the weather happens to be gusty, instead of wet, the straw is blown about in all directions, greatly to the discomfort and inconvenience of the pedestrian.

AN OBSOLETE BOARD.

At the Annual Meeting of the subscribers of the Royal Hospital for Incurables, held recently at the Cannon Street Hotel, Miss Georgiana Hill moved, "That, in view of the fact that by far the larger proportion of the inmates of the Royal Hospital for Incurables are women, it is desirable the women should be added to the board of management." This was seconded by Miss Annie Goff, but on being put to the meeting was defeated by a large majority, 19 voting for it. We heard the other day an amusing story that the Board of Management of this institution was so terrified at the possible invasion of women into what they consider a strictly masculine preserve that sundry members implored subscribers to come and support them against "the coming attack." It is, of course, outrageous that in these days—or, for the matter of that, in any days—such an institution containing a large number of women, should not include women to represent their interests, as well as to give expert advice in domestic matters, upon the Board of Management. We are aware that there is a Ladies' Committee, but so long as they have no votes on the Body responsible for the Government of the Institution that is of very little moment. It is difficult to understand why Miss Hill's action should have been, as it is stated to have been, "fiercely resented by the Board, who hold that such a step is both unnecessary and undesirable," a more important, because more hopeless, condition is that "the Committee of lady visitors agree." So long as women are disloyal to the interests of their own sex so long will the task of those who bravely advocate these be made unnecessarily difficult to those who are true to them. We congratulate Miss Hill upon raising this important point, and also upon giving notice that she would move the same resolution next year.

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