

Annotations.

THE WATER SUPPLY OF TROOPS ON THE MARCH.

It is satisfactory to learn that the War Office has framed, and is about to put into execution, a scheme for supplying soldiers on the march with "safe" water—that is, water which has been sterilised or efficiently filtered. It is hoped that the result will be to render the soldier independent of the pools and streams which he may encounter on the march, and which contain doubtful, or worse than doubtful, water. Special water carts of French design, of the Lefebvre pattern are to be attached to columns in the proportion of two to each thousand men. These are provided with an apparatus for sterilizing the water collected, and it is only after passing through this process that it will be delivered to the ordinary water carts. This provision should appreciably decrease deaths from disease among the troops on active service.

THE VISITING OF SMALL-POX PATIENTS.

A short time ago, by the courtesy of the Medical Superintendent of the Gore Farm Hospital, Dartford, we were able to publish the rules under which friends are allowed to visit patients in the small-pox hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The question has recently been under the consideration of the Board, as several borough and district councils have written protesting against visiting being allowed, and at the last meeting of the Asylums Board the Hospitals Committee presented a report on the question.

"Unquestionably," say the Committee, "this subject is of extreme importance. In smallpox (as in fever and diphtheria), visiting is limited to those patients who, in the medical officers' opinion, are dangerously ill, and the visits are restricted to the nearest relatives or intimate friends. Two visits daily are allowed to each patient.

To forbid absolutely the consolation which is afforded by the few minutes' access to relatives who may be at the point of death would, we venture to say, almost amount to inhumanity, and, if it were attempted, we believe the effect would be to delay, if not prevent, isolation.

Certain precautions are insisted upon at the hospitals—for instance, the giving of the visitor a light meal on arrival, so that he or she may be physically better able to resist infection; the clothing of visitors in overalls and bonnets;

and the prohibition from touching or handling the patient. And revaccination is "urged"—but beyond this," say the Committee, "we do not feel that we can advise the Board to go."

A MUNICIPAL MILK SHOP.

Happy Battersea babies! One of the greatest troubles in the feeding of infants, more especially those of the poor, is the difficulty of obtaining a pure milk supply, or even when the milk is pure, the danger of its contamination from its surroundings when kept in open vessels. But Battersea has solved the difficulty locally, and is about to open a municipal milk shop to supply sterilised milk for infants under a year old. It is proposed to supply sufficient milk, of irreproachable purity, to feed 400 babies daily, at an average charge of 1s. 6d. a week each. The health of the infant population of the neighbourhood should certainly improve.

THE DANGER OF FLANNELETTE.

Flannelette has attained a wide popularity as a substitute for flannel, as it is both warm and cheap, and nowhere has its use been more adopted than in hospitals. But from time to time its danger, on account of its extreme inflammability is demonstrated, and its use should undoubtedly be prohibited in hospital wards and discontinued by nurses. Last week an inquest was held at Haslemere on Miss Muriel A. Parnell, who was visiting in the neighbourhood, and was so severely burned that she died from shock. At the time of the accident she was wearing a flannelette dressing-gown which, it is supposed caught fire from a candle as she was getting into bed. The jury, in returning a verdict of accidental death, expressed the opinion that the wearing of flannelette was to be condemned, an opinion which most persons who have noted its inflammable qualities will endorse.

THE VALUE OF WOMEN INSPECTORS.

Speaking at the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Conference, Mrs. H. J. Tennant, late Chief Woman Inspector of Factories, emphasized the value of women's work in this capacity. The number of women employed as inspectors was, she said, still absurdly inadequate. This was not a matter upon which the nation ought to economise. The economic waste which was caused by insanitary conditions—such for example as arose from the degradation through ill-health of men and women from the ranks of skilled to those of unskilled labour—was of far-reaching significance.

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