

The Ladies' Public Health Society, in union with the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, is doing most valuable public work. In connection with the abnormally high infant death-rate the visitors of the Society, working under the Manchester as well as the Salford Medical Officer of Health, are explaining to uneducated mothers where mistakes are made and how to remedy them. One point made at the recent annual meeting of this Society was that in connection with the work of district nurses many difficulties would be removed if landlords would visit their property, which was often so neglected as to lead to ill-health. None pay at a higher rate for rent than the very poor, and the accommodation provided for them is often a disgrace to our civilisation.

A new out-patient department has been opened by the Countess of Derby in connection with the Infirmary for Children, Liverpool. The well-planned accommodation includes a space for perambulators, an isolation room, and an ophthalmic room. This is the first department of the new Infirmary for Children, which is being erected on the most modern and up-to-date designs.

One hundred years ago the following announcement appeared in the columns of the *Times* :—

"The invaluable discovery of Dr. Jenner, for the extermination of the small-pox, having undergone the most rigorous investigation and received the sanction of Parliament, a meeting will be held at the London Tavern, Bishopsgate, on Wednesday, the 19th inst., at twelve o'clock, to consider the best means of carrying the same into effect; when the company of every gentleman disposed to concur in this laudable undertaking is requested. The chair will be taken by the Lord Mayor precisely at one o'clock."

More Windfalls.

The London Hospital appeal is receiving generous support.

Under the will of the late Mr. George Harry Hide, the county cricket enthusiast, it is expected that the Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital will benefit to the extent of £10,000. This is a most opportune legacy, as the Committee are building a beautiful and long-needed home for the nurses, and of late years have been in duty bound to erect and fit new wards to bring the institution up to date.

Mr. John Sumison Townsend, of Stamford Lodge, Sevenoaks, has bequeathed £200 to the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street and £200 to the Brompton Hospital for Consumption.

Presentation to a Popular Officer.

On the occasion of leaving Ruchill Hospital, Glasgow, to become Matron of the McKelvie Hospital, Oban, Miss Agnes Espie, one of the Assistant Matrons, received the following presents :—From a number of the nurses, a china afternoon-tea set; from the maids, a beautiful morocco leather dressing-case; and from the men, a handsome case of afternoon silver tea and jelly spoons and butter-knife, also a silver and crystal jelly-dish, besides numerous other presents, as tokens of their appreciation for her kindness and consideration for them.

Professional Review.

CONSTIPATION.

Constipation is probably the commonest ill to which flesh is heir, and receives less attention than its importance deserves, consequently we welcome the small volume by Mr. G. Sherman Bigg, F.R.C.S.E., Fellow of the Royal Institute of Public Health, &c., which is published by Messrs. Ballière, Tindall and Cox, 8, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, price 2s. 6d.

In the introduction the author points out that "every day the public and the profession are learning more and more of the germ origin of disease, but the germ without a suitable soil for maturation would die a premature death. In a great measure due to constipation making the soil fertile for the reproduction of germs, the individual is rendered susceptible to disease. Germs are the attacking force, while the constitution is the fortification, against which all efforts are futile and powerless unless a weak spot in the defence is found. . . . The mistake of to-day is to aim at the destruction of the germ instead of devoting all energy to the strengthening of the fortification. Constipation is one of the weak spots in the defence of the constitution."

Later the author says :—"The first thought on taking a house is to ascertain that the drainage is in good order, because it is so well understood that defective drainage is the cause of so many illnesses—from sore throats to enteric or typhoid fever. The same care and precaution are necessary for the preservation of health, for the same reasoning holds good, and if the drains of the human body are clogged and choked with decomposing waste material, ill-health must inevitably follow."

Amongst the many evils caused by constipation is that "by slow degrees the accumulated mass decomposes, a poison is generated, partial paralysis of the bowels results, flatulence follows, and the abdomen becomes greatly distended. The blood absorbs the poison, and deranges the whole general system. All the organs of the body, owing to the vitiation of the blood, become improperly nourished, consequently the various secretions become deteriorated, and the far-reaching effects of this blood-poisoning cannot be over-estimated.

"This condition is responsible for most of the minor ailments of life. It causes numberless varieties of aches and pains, and produces endless forms of discomfort. It is a frequent explanation of so-called attacks of nerves, accounts for many an irritable outburst of temper, and is a frequent cause of the utter prostration of nervous exhaustion. It lays the foundation for the development of hysteria, hypochondriasis, and melancholia, and lies at the root of the tired feeling after any slight exertion; the faintings, giddiness, and palpitations; the dread of impending evil; the burning flushes and the clammy sweats; the hot head and the cold extremities; the buzzing in the ears and the noises in the head; and other numerous ailments. It influences the brain, interferes with all the natural functions of the body, and transforms a simple indisposition into an apparently serious illness, oftentimes creating a feeling that life is not worth the living."

In ascertaining the extent of the trouble caused by constipation the presence, deficiency, or absence of peristaltic contracting power are, we are told, the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)