

a day, and a Vienna doctor, in a letter to the *Neue Freie Presse*, depicts the state of affairs prevailing at Hamburg in the gloomiest colours. He states (according to a Reuter's telegram) that "the whole sanitary machinery is in the greatest disorder, and that everything has to be improvised. The transport of the sick is effected in 60 hired landaus, each conveying four persons, who are frequently in a dying condition. There are altogether 150 ambulance attendants, who generally wear their ordinary clothes instead of the oil-cloth garments advocated by specialists as a protection against the propagation of the disease. In the Eppendorf Hospital, where there are in all 800 patients suffering from various maladies, the number of doctors is absolutely inadequate, and the medical men available have to strain every nerve to cope with the many cases requiring attention. The self-sacrifice displayed by them is worthy of the highest praise. Another drawback at the Eppendorf Hospital is that whenever cholera patients are brought in, some of the ordinary cases of illness have to be removed. In one room, the writer saw as many as 200 dead bodies. The epidemic continues, the letter says, raging in all the quarters of the city. At the outset every person seized succumbed, but now only 50 per cent. die."

Another doctor reports that furniture vans are now being brought into requisition to carry away the dead, and that the whole hospital arrangements show all the confusion incidental to hasty and haphazard initiation. It is now intended to fit up the schools and gymnastic halls as hospitals. In a second letter the writer deals with the Old Hamburg Hospital. The condition of things here is described as infinitely more horrible even than at the Eppendorf Hospital. In dirty neglected passages, bundles of clothing lie four or five hours awaiting disinfection, and in the midst of these packages are numbers of dead bodies, laid there anyhow, in distressing confusion. The doors of the wards, with which these corridors communicate, are left wide open, so that the sick can actually see the ever growing numbers of the dead. To get into the wards themselves, people have to step over the corpses and the piles of clothing. Nobody knows the number of sick and dead. The overcrowding

in the wards is fearful. In a room fitted up for 30 patients there are as many as 60, and the sick lie in such close proximity to one another, that all nursing is rendered very difficult. Many rest on bare mattresses which are filthy from use, and have no covering. For every 40 to 60 patients there are but two attendants and one doctor. So absolute is the confusion, that people who are not suffering from the malady at all are brought into the cholera wards, and there contract the disease. Private dwellings where deaths occur are not disinfected. All that is done is to take portable articles to the public disinfection institutions, and even this is carried out without proper precautions, as the public are allowed to enter these places, and may sometimes even become infected there. The Senate has now at last voted half a million of marks (£25,000) to enable the authorities to cope with the epidemic. "If only," says the writer in conclusion, "one half of this sum had been granted a fortnight ago, much misery would have been saved."

We have quoted thus, at length, in order to show not only the deplorable condition of affairs at Hamburg, but also what might easily occur under similar circumstances even in this country, and therefore point the moral that immediate preparations should be made to provide for all contingencies in English Hospitals. It has been the characteristic of our nation, from the earliest times, to be unprepared for emergencies, and there can be little doubt that if Cholera had invaded this country, six weeks ago, as might easily have happened, this want of preparation might have had the most disastrous results. Mercifully, thus far, the pestilence has been stayed; the wise and efficient precautions taken by the various sanitary authorities have caused all imported cases of the disease to prove harmless to the community. But the danger is only postponed, not prevented, and its intensity can be measured by the foothold which it has gained in Hamburg, Havre, and other ports within a few hours' sail from our shores. In all these towns next spring, the recrudescence of the disease may be confidently expected, and then its importation into fifty towns along our coast, and, from thence, inland, can hardly be prevented. This winter, then,

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