

In a Cholera Hospital at Hamburg.

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EPPENDORFER HOSPITAL,
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WE are still working, though the now rapid diminution of the number of patients is very much lightening everyone's hands. At present there are about 100 deaths daily in the city, but this is as nothing compared with the previous records. They are starting on clearing out some wards, scrupulously disinfecting and cleansing them for the reception of general cases. Eight days is allowed for this purpose, and at the expiration of that time the ward is considered fit for other than cholera patients. The few pavilions that have been cleared out are rapidly filling, the need for some place of shelter having been strongly felt during the time the Eppendorfer has been devoted entirely to the treatment of Cholera. All the private and small Hospitals in the city have been full to overflowing with surgical and medical cases, as the two large Hospitals of the town—the New and the Old—were entirely absorbed by the epidemic. I passed my old block yesterday, for I have changed wards several times, following up the thick of the fight, and was amused to see my late staff Nurse, with her head tied up in a duster, sweeping and scrubbing to her heart's content. Hers was really a surgical domain, and she did not altogether approve of the epidemic encroaching upon it. Now they are putting all the new male Cholera cases into "the barracks," which consist of a series of eight iron buildings, with some forty picturesque-looking tents, flying white flags, each with a red cross in the centre, standing on a piece of waste land belonging to the Hospital. These tents are lighted by electricity, and the whole ground is studded with arc-lights, so that the effect at night is very charming, looking like an encampment of a foreign people, or like an ideal battlefield. Nearly all new cases of women and children are being put into the rear of the building, where in ordinary times the proper infectious quarters are.

Though we feel happy to have done such work when help was so greatly needed, and though we feel we have added something valuable to our Nursing experience, and much that is impressive in its kinship with human life and suffering, we shall be glad enough to feel that it is a thing of the past. The scenes of suffering, death, and bereavement are appalling. We see dying mothers watch the

death of their children in neighbouring beds, or that of the infants in their arms; and though the curious apathy so common to Cholera sometimes blunts their sense of the horror of the thing, yet, frequently, they feel it acutely, and, in the intervals between their own miseries, cry and weep distressingly. Patients' friends, of course, are not admitted to the ward for fear of contagion, but of course they frequently come to the gates of the Hospital to hear the latest of the condition of those who are dear to them. One poor man, by special favour, pays an occasional visit, and glances wistfully through the closed glass panes at his sick wife. Some of the patients wonder ceaselessly why some husband, son, or brother does not arrive to learn tidings of them. We, seeing the daily and nightly influx of carts bringing new patients to the male quarters, wonder not at all.

Large omnibuses are arriving hourly now to convey convalescents back to their homes, but, surely, home-comings are but rarely fraught with such possible painful revelations as those which take place during a cholera epidemic. Many are snatched actually from the jaws of death only to learn that, may be, one or several of their nearest and dearest have been taken from them. The little children prattle to us of "nach hause," and what they will say to Minna and Carline and Wilhelm when the happy time to go home arrives, but we, who are in the secret, know that long ago Minna and Carline's only home has been in the cemetery of newly-made graves, and that Wilhelm is, only just now, passing rapidly to the beyond. In the ward, the dead woman borne away in a sheet is often the first intimation to her children in a neighbouring bed that they are motherless, and wailings and pitiful sobs and cries follow the porters with their ghastly burden.

Recovery from Cholera is said to be rapid, but the convalescents do not look by any means recovered, appearing in a large proportion of cases hollow-eyed, gaunt spectres, the skin yellow and ill-nourished, as if their illness had lasted for months instead of days. The diet of these convalescents, who have amazing appetites, is somewhat surprising to us, whose views of dietetics have been gained at home. Veal very lightly cooked, ham not cooked at all (the Germans regarding it as wicked to cook good meat!) fried rissoles, sausages, mulled claret, and hot coffee are consumed in enormous quantities. One sees quite small children munching ravenously at a sausage held in the hand. The food supplied is most liberal in quantity, each patient being allowed as much as he can possibly eat. The diet list and its variety would considerably astonish the managers of an English hospital. It is also remarkably well cooked and thoroughly good.

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