

two rows of iron posts, with iron trusses, covered with Mangalore tiles placed on wooden ribs. In its construction all the four sides of each shed have been left open, but now that the place is used as a fever hospital some loose *khapetás* are arranged on sides which afford but poor protection to the patients against the disagreeable cold north-easterly blast which blows every morning and evening during this season. In the absence of doors and windows, some *khapetás* on the sides are removed here and there to form them, which gaps give direct draft to certain patients right over their beds. Throughout the length of the shed there is a ridge ventilation in the middle, about a couple of feet higher than the main roof, but as the open sides of the ridge ventilation are not covered with venetians the cold wind in the early morning makes the sick people there miserable. Again, there is no wooden planking under the tiles, so the crevices between them, with here and there a tile broken, make the inmates shiver with cold on a dewy morning. [The floor is stated to be of mud.]

WANT OF DOCTORS, NURSES, AND COMFORTS.

It may be urged in defence that this building was hurriedly constructed to meet a great emergency, but this defence does not apply to the statements contained in the following quotation:

They [the public] will say "your hospital for the sick with plague is a disgrace to you. You have neither doctors, nurses, nor comforts. Why do you not at once spend money in this direction and remove this reproach from your city? How do you expect that the poorer classes will, when stricken, go to your hospital, where they hear that patients are neglected by reason of the want of attendants? How can you expect your nurses to do their work when they have no comfortable or sanitary accommodation during their few short hours of repose? How can you expect good work from your overdone medical officer in charge?"

Yet offers of help are being poured in at home. Nurses in England are offering their services free of charge, but the India Office does not move a finger towards despatching them.

We are glad to read later that something has been done to redeem the apathy as regards the treatment of the sick:

Something has been done during the past few days to improve the state of affairs at the Arthur Road Hospital. A medical graduate, Dr. F. N. Daveda, has been appointed to assist Dr. Choksey, and Drs. Underwood and Pilgamer have undertaken to give voluntary aid. In addition to these practitioners, Dr. Choksey has for a fortnight past had the voluntary assistance, for four hours in the day, of Mr. Richardson, Ph.D. and F.C.S., in nursing the patients. There are now four hospital assistants on duty—an addition of one—and three sisters are nursing during the day and one at night.

Even this is but meagre help. Sisters from the convents are being drafted into the hospitals as nurses. We admire the courage and devotion of these ladies, but properly trained nurses are what is wanted, and not the empiric nursing of well-meaning women.

EXTENSION OF THE EPIDEMIC.

Plague is reported as prevalent in the following places: Poona, Thana and Surat districts, Coorla, Bandora and Bhiwandi; in all these places plague is severe. In the following places the disease is less severe: Ahmednagar, Satara, Rutnagiri, Colaba, Kathiawar, Kolhapur, and Cutch. In In Afghanistan and Beluchistan there are no cases of plague up to the present. Fairs and pilgrimages throughout the Bombay Presidency are being stopped where necessary.

THE BATTLE OF THE CLUBS.

BECKENHAM AND PENGE.

THE controversy between the medical practitioners in Beckenham and Penge and the clubs in these districts appears about to enter on a more acute phase. It will be remembered that the chief claims put forward by the medical profession were that a wage limit should be fixed, that the remuneration should be raised from 4s. to 6s. from each member annually, that every medical officer should be *ex officio* a member of the committee of the club which he attends; and that all new members should be examined by the medical officer who should be paid 1s. for such examination.

Later on a second circular letter was sent to each club secretary before the club delegates met, explaining the objects of the demands made, and clearly showing that the medical officers of the clubs were preparing to make a compromise with regard to two points, the wage limit, and the presence of the medical officer on the club committee.

The delegates at their meeting, however, would appear to have contented themselves with denouncing the proposals made by the medical officers, and carried by a majority a resolution to the effect that the proposals being inimical to the best interests of the clubs, should be referred back to

the Beckenham and Penge Medical Society. It was further intimated to that Society that it was the desire of the delegates that the proposal should be dropped for the present, but that at a later date any medical officer dissatisfied with the terms paid to him might apply to his club when his application would be considered.

We are informed that at the next meeting of the Beckenham and Penge Medical Society it was unanimously decided that in view of the uncompromising attitude of the club delegates, the members of the Medical Society had no option but to adhere to their previous circulars. The Medical Society decided further that if the clubs refused to accede to the demands each medical officer should on March 25th give to his club three months' notice of his intention to resign his appointment, and that in acquainting the club secretary of this decision he should point out that he was still willing to discuss the extension of the wage limit, and to accept, in place of the claim to membership of the club committee, an undertaking that no question affecting the conduct of the medical officer should be brought up except in his presence.

There the matter rests for the present, but it is understood that a meeting of the club delegates will be held this week, and that it will consider a proposal to obtain the services of a medical man from outside the district to undertake the duties of attending the members of all clubs at a fixed salary.

The controversy in this district therefore appears to be taking what would seem to be the usual course. The medical profession in Beckenham and Penge are undoubtedly following a wise plan, and one designed in the interests not only of themselves but of their club patients, in requiring reasonable remuneration and reasonable safeguards against the clubs being abused by persons belonging to a class which have no equitable claim to receive medical attendance at rates specially designed to meet the wants of the more necessitous members of the working classes.

DUNDEE.

THE lodges of the Ancient Order of Shepherds in Dundee do not seem inclined to join with the other friendly societies in increasing the salary of the medical officer. The Heather Bell and Hilton lodges having definitively refused to grant the increase the medical officers have resigned, and there being no prospect that any practitioner will accept the appointments, it will be a matter of some interest to see how the lodges will manage their business.

PORTSMOUTH MEDICAL AID ASSOCIATION.

THE *Portsmouth Evening News* publishes an account of the annual general meeting of the Portsmouth Medical Benefit Society. The wage limit is specially reprobated by the upholders of the present abuses, and one of them indignantly criticised the very reasonable opinion expressed by one of their medical officers "that it was not right for many of the members, who were possibly better off financially than himself, to be allowed to remain in the society, and that he thought some scheme could be arranged to exclude this class of members." "This," said the speaker, "was dictating as to who should and who should not belong to the society."

If the present opponents of reform would but consider, at least, the possibility of union in the profession, they must see that a wage limit will have to be conceded in spite of the noisy clamour about "dictating" to the members. Their only means of maintaining the present position is dissension among ourselves; for few can suppose that Acts of Parliament are likely to be passed to coerce the medical profession into undertaking the medical care of well to do persons at the rate of a penny a week.

A PROFESSIONAL JUBILEE.—Dr. M. W. Nencki, director of the chemical department of the Institute for Experimental Medicine, has recently celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his appointment as Professor of Pathological Chemistry in the University of St. Petersburg. He was presented by his friends and former pupils with a *Festschrift*, which contains, amongst others, papers by Professor Thomas Arthus of Freiburg, and Dr. Kostanecky of Bern. The Council of the University of Kasan, with which Professor Nencki was connected at the commencement of his professional career, has elected him honorary member, a distinction which is considered a very high compliment in Russia.

THE number of students in the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, is stated to be 920.