

MILKBORNE DISEASE: THE LEGISLATION REQUIRED.

THE report just completed in our pages by Mr. Ernest Hart on the influence of milk in spreading zymotic disease has proved, as might be expected, to have aroused great public comment and professional interest, and we are receiving from many sources warm recommendations that it should be republished in a separate form, as was the former report of 1881, which laid the foundation for much recent legislation for the protection of the public in this matter. Although laborious in its nature and elaborate in the precautions taken to obtain full and exact details of the numerous epidemics, it will be noted that the conclusions of the report are in themselves sufficiently simple. The report has to do with 95 local outbreaks of disease—diphtheria, scarlatina, typhoid fever, and allied maladies—an abstract of the reports on which accompany it. In 83 instances where the facts are recorded, 2,946 cases of disease were caused by specifically-contaminated milk; whilst in 53 instances where deaths are recorded these total to 367, and these data are felt to be far below the actual, both as to suffering and mortality. The suggestions for further legislation and for additional precautions which arise out of it will no doubt be submitted at an early date to the notice of the Parliamentary Bills Committee. For, in addition to the daily growing necessity for urging upon the public the undoubted need for the boiling of all milk received into houses, and upon all dairy farmers and milksellers the need for absolute cleanliness in all dairying and milk-distributing matters, there remain not a few important considerations which seem to demand the attention—indeed, the early attention—of the Legislature.

With the report on The Influence of Milk in Spreading Zymotic Disease before our readers, little more need here be done than simply to enumerate the points.

1. Need for setting up some authority—central or county—having in its charge the dairy farms and milkshops of the country or county, with adequate power of inspection and regulation of all premises on which milk is produced, manipulated, or sold.

2. Statutory inspection by local medical officers of health of all such premises in their districts, with right of entry at all reasonable hours and on all (emergent and other) occasions, with power of inspection of all cattle, apparatus, utensils, etc.

3. Power to local authority to immediately prohibit the sale of milk reported by their medical officer of health to be causing, in his opinion, disease in human consumers, the dairyman, etc., interested having the onus of showing within (say) twenty-four hours valid reason why the prohibition should be removed, such reason to carry with it reimbursement of the amount of loss sustained by the action of the local authority.

4. Prohibition of milk to be absolute—that is, to operate as regards the particular milk service to its total prohibition everywhere, for the time being, as food for man.

5. Certain diseases, to be defined, and, if need be, added to, of teats and udders of milch cows to be scheduled as infectious diseases of cattle for the purpose of securing penalty on all persons selling milk secreted by cattle so suffering. (See also 13.)

6. All persons keeping milch cows, or selling milk, to seek registration under local authority under pain of heavy penalty for neglect of this duty.

7. All such persons to be under obligation to furnish the local authority from time to time with complete or supplementary or amended lists of customers, wholesale and retail, at a specified rate of payment.

8. Local authority to have powers of condemnation of improper or polluted water supplies, and defective means of drainage of dairy farms, premises, etc., and to have power of prohibition of sale of milk produce whilst conditions dangerous to human consumers of the milk obtain after notice for their remedy has been issued.

9. The cubic space per cow to be fixed, a minimum being 800 feet.

10. Matters concerning the notification, concealment, and nursing of infectious disease on premises connected with any

dairying business, or in the persons of individuals exercised in such business, to be stringently dealt with by statute, since experience has demonstrated the danger of unnotified, concealed, and badly housed disease in relation with the production and sale of milk.

11. The manufacture of ice cream to be placed on a basis of safety to its consumers, in respect of production, materials, etc., place of manipulation, storage, and sale.

12. The penalties imposed to be commensurate with the issues at stake.

13. No milk to be allowed to be used for the food of man coming from a shed in which any cow is housed whilst suffering under a scheduled disease (see No. 5), even though the milch cow producing the milk be not herself visibly so suffering.

TWELFTH INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS, MOSCOW.

MR. G. H. MAKINS informs us that guests of the Congress, including ladies, will pay no admission fee, but they will not be entitled to free railway passes from the frontier stations on the Russian lines accorded to members. They will, however, enjoy the privileges accorded by other foreign railway and navigation companies, and may take part in the excursion to the Caucasus organised by the executive of the Congress. They will also, probably, be able to avail themselves of the advantages of cheap circular tickets, the arrangements for which are still under discussion.

A Special Committee has been formed in Moscow to arrange for hotel and lodging accommodation for visitors, under the presidency of Professor Chervinsky, of Moscow, to whom applications may be made for information. Rooms may be retained in advance, and in addition offices will be established at each of the railway stations in Moscow, where application may be made on arrival. The cost of rooms will average about 4s. 6d. (2 roubles) per diem.

A Committee of ladies of Moscow has also been formed, with the object of ensuring the object and convenience of ladies belonging to the family of members of the Congress who may attend. This Committee will have a central office at which visitors on their arrival may obtain any information they require, and also learn the most satisfactory way of employing their time in visiting places of interest in Moscow during the sittings of the Congress. This Committee wishes to be apprised in advance of the names of all ladies who will be present, and notice should at once be given to Professor Sairelieff, the Secretary of the Ladies' Committee, through Professor W. K. Roth, the General Secretary.

A general prospectus of the arrangements of the Congress will shortly be ready, and will be obtainable on application to Professor W. K. Roth, Secretary-General, Twelfth International Medical Congress, Moscow.

DEATHS UNDER ANÆSTHETICS.

CHLOROFORM.

MR. W. E. L. HORNER, M.B. (House-Physician, Derbyshire Royal Infirmary), informs us that a death under chloroform occurred at the infirmary on May 17th. The patient was a child, aged 1 year 5 months, suffering from a large empyema in the left pleura. The heart was pushed so far over to the right that the apex was just inside the right nipple line. An exploratory puncture had been made before admission to the hospital, and pus withdrawn. The child's general condition was bad, there being dark rings under the eyes, the face and lips pale and slightly cyanosed. The child had had a convulsive attack the night previously, which, however, passed off in a few minutes. The usual operation for empyema having been decided upon, chloroform was administered on a folded piece of lint. About two minutes after the commencement of the administration the child suddenly stopped breathing and collapsed. Artificial respiration was at once resorted to, both in the horizontal and inverted positions, and kept up for fully half an hour, but with no avail. A few slight attempts at spontaneous respiration were noticed at one period, but soon stopped. Stimulants (ether and strychnine) were also injected. Not more than half a drachm of chloroform was used altogether. There was no *post-mortem* examination.