

on very well. On Monday last we discharged 40 soldiers cured, others we had sent out previously, and now we have men busy whitewashing and scouring the rooms, as we daily expect fresh lots of wounded from both Kars and Olti I have operated on two cases lately. In both I removed the foot just above the ankle, and they are, I am glad to say, doing well. Dr. Casson's operation cases are also going on most satisfactorily. Last Saturday Mr. Zohrab began to pay the hospital servants a certain sum per week according to rank. Doing so has made a most perceptible difference both in the care of the wounded and in obeying our orders. Some of the men had not seen pay for 18 months. Mr. Pierce, American missionary, assists us in getting tea, &c., made and distributed along with a little tobacco every day, for which small kindness the poor fellows are most grateful. The weather continues very hot. Yesterday we had a slight thunder shower which cleared the air a good deal. All last night and to-day it has been blowing strongly

Consul Zohrab writes:—"Erzeroum, 6th August: Mr. Casson has, I believe, reported to you how the work has been progressing and what was done to make the influence of real surgeons felt here at once. I am happy to say that Messrs. Casson and Featherstonhaugh's efforts have already met with marked success in the restoration to health of many wounded who, without their skilful care, would have now been in their graves. The Turkish 'house-surgeon' attached to our hospital has not been paid for twenty-two months, and he has lately been selling his clothes to buy food. His position is such that we (Mr. Casson and myself) are of opinion that he should receive a small weekly allowance to enable him to live. By giving this, we shall secure his services, and he will be a useful servant."

The *Times* correspondent, writing from Erzeroum under date the 13th August, says:—"It is a pleasure to turn from the scene of criminal carelessness and mismanagement daily visible in the Turkish hospital to the clean, well-ordered, admirably organised establishment under the charge of Doctors Casson and Featherstonhaugh, who have been sent out here at the sole charge of that philanthropic nobleman, Lord Blantyre."

ON THE PREVENTION OF DISEASE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Whilst freely admitting that further legislation is required before there is a prospect of making any great impression upon the amount of preventable disease in England, I still venture to think that some steps might be taken in that direction whilst we are waiting for a new Sanitary Bill.

We are now in a position to be able to affirm that while good drainage and pure water are of the utmost importance, there is yet some further step requisite before we can hope to check the progress of disease. It is impossible to look back at the sanitary records of the last twenty-five years without perceiving that while certain towns have been great gainers by the introduction of good systems of drainage and pure water, yet on the whole the march of zymotic disease has been unchecked.

With our present imperfect knowledge of the etiology of infectious diseases, it is impossible to say whether by our sanitation we are striking at the disease itself or only preventing its diffusion. Something more is necessary if we would test the possibility of extinguishing a disease. Any attempt to do this must prove fruitless until further measures are taken to isolate and thoroughly disinfect every first case of infectious disease which may appear. And this must be done most thoroughly, and not in the careless and half sceptical way in which such duties are too often performed. If it be still a matter of question whether patients after scarlet fever or small-pox may safely be allowed to communicate with the healthy after three weeks, or must be kept apart until six weeks are over, let the longest limit be chosen, until a final decision is arrived at, without regard to any inconveniences arising therefrom. If it be a question whether all the secretions and excretions from the body during the period of isolation be infectious or only those from certain organs, let them all be thoroughly disinfected, until the truth is clearly determined.

But the difficulty at once presents itself. According to our present arrangements and legislation, there is no one whose duty it is to enforce either isolation or disinfection, and the generality of people are so ignorant of the first principles of sanitary science that they know not how to set about it even if they have sense enough to wish to prevent the spread of the disease. Until, by means of a new law, every householder is obliged to give notice of any case of infectious disease arising in his house, and every officer of health has the power and the means of isolating and disinfecting every case, recourse must be had to other means.

I would propose that the difficulty be met from two sides at once.

In the first place, in every school, whether School Board school or parish, or ladies' boarding school, or grammar school or public school, let some two or three hours a week be devoted to the principles of isolation and disinfection. Some simple book should at once be adopted as the text-book throughout the land. The rules which are known are few and simple, and not hard to remember. By this means within a few years there would be a considerable increase in the knowledge of the practical rules of quarantine in every class and rank.

In the second place it will be necessary, while waiting for this desirable result, to set active hands to work. This would be quite possible if the same text-book were distributed in every parish, urban or rural, to every district visitor, missionary, or bible-reader. At the same time there should be established in every district some sort of Sanitary Aid Association, such as already exists at Manchester, Hastings, and other towns, to supply disinfectants, and to furnish an executive to carry out the financial part of the undertaking.

The work of this association in Hastings, the one with which I am best acquainted, has been most satisfactory. Since its first foundation, although cases of infectious disease have often appeared in the district, yet there has been no epidemic, and in no case which has been in the hands of the association has the disease spread beyond the first patient. The manager of the association has given some lectures, which have been published, on the prevention of the spread of disease, and which would form an admirable text-book for the use of all young people and beginners.

Now that women are feeling that they need work, here is an opening for them to help in the best of all works—the prevention of disease.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Cannes, August, 1877. G. C. BRIGHT, M.D. Oxon.

"A POCKET INSULATED SURFACE THERMOMETER."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I must thank you for the prompt insertion of my letter of the 21st inst., and have also to thank Dr. Mortimer Granville for the courteous manner in which he admits my prior claim.

On my part I readily acknowledge that the box form given to the thermometer by Dr. Mortimer Granville renders it far more convenient as a pocket instrument, and also to some extent for application to various parts of the body. In the latter respect, however, if the stem of my thermometer be bent at right angles to its present position there would be little to choose between the two.

At the same time I hope I may be pardoned for expressing my conviction that these drawbacks to my thermometer are more than counterbalanced by the following advantages:—1st. The superior accuracy attainable in a straight-stemmed as against a curved-stemmed thermometer. 2nd. The fact that mine is a registering thermometer, whereas the other is not, and probably cannot be converted into one.

No one who has experienced the inconvenience of having to read a thermometer while in position will ever willingly exchange a registering for an ordinary one. The former also has the additional advantage that almost anyone can apply it, and can then bring it to the skilled observer for reading.

I remain, Sir, yours, &c.,
Westminster Hospital, August 25th, 1877. A. DUPEÉ.