

old woman comes with a nutshell full of the matter of the best kind of small-pox, and asks what vein you will please to have opened. She immediately rips open that you offer with a large needle, and puts in as much matter as will lie on the head of her needle, and after that binds up the little wound with a hollow shell, and in this manner opens two or three veins."

This experiment Lady Mary tried on her son, and was most anxious to introduce the practice into England, but she met with much opposition, not only from that most conservative of all professions, the medical profession, but also from clergymen, who denounced her from the pulpit for "impiously rebelling against the decrees of Providence." The people hooted her as an unnatural mother who had endangered the lives of her own children. She, however, found some powerful supporters. The Princess of Wales understood the importance of the measure, and slowly but surely the practice gained ground.

Small-pox is one of the most infectious diseases. It is not influenced by age or sex, but is said to be more virulent in hot climates and in dark-skinned races, negroes being peculiarly susceptible. It is spread solely by contagion, and it is said that the infectious material may be carried through the air and operate at a considerable distance from the centre of infection. It was probably on this supposition that, when the epidemic of 1884-5 broke out, the Metropolitan Asylums Board adopted the expedient of treating all cases which would bear removal in isolated spots at some distance from the metropolis. This method of isolation, though complete enough, necessarily entailed considerable expense. The mode of procedure was as follows: Each case as it occurred was notified to the central office in Norfolk Street, Strand, from which communication was made by telephone with the ambulance station nearest the district in which the patient resided. An ambulance was at once dispatched. The ambulances were very comfortable, being provided with an air-bed and a nurse armed with restoratives. The small-pox patient was then taken to the nearest small-pox hospital, when the medical superintendent decided what was to be done with him. If too ill to bear a long journey, he was detained in the hospital until convalescent; but if not dangerously ill, he was at once taken to the nearest wharf (specially constructed for the purpose), placed on board a steam launch comfortably fitted up with beds, and so, under the care of a doctor and nurse, was taken some miles down the river to the ship hospitals, from which when convalescent he was again transferred to the camp for small-pox convalescents at Darenth, near Dartford. When the danger of communicating infection was past, he was sent back to the wharf by steamer and thence home by ambulance.

There are three ships lying in the Thames, in Long-Reach, just opposite Purfleet, viz.: the *Atlas*, an old man-of-war, the *Endymion*, and the *Castalia*, the latter a twin ship, which was built to run between Dover and Calais. The object of the double ship was to prevent rolling, and so sea-sickness; but it failed in this, and the owners were glad enough to dispose of it for its present purpose. The ships are connected by a most complicated gangway, which allows them to rise and fall with the tide, and to move a little from side to side. When these ships are full, the *Atlas* is devoted to women, the *Castalia* to men, and the *Endymion* supplies the administrative accommodation necessary. The decks of the *Atlas* are very picturesque, with their low roofs, great length, long row of white beds, each with a crimson shawl at the foot, the huge black iron chains, the round windows and well-scrubbed floors. Doctors, nurses, and patients agreed in liking the *Atlas* best. The chapel is on its deck, but it is not only used for "service": I have seen it lined with beds when the patients came in by the score. The *Castalia* has a very different appearance. The wards are built on its deck; their strong point is ventilation—not beauty. The ships lie about fifty yards from the shore, but disconnected. The laundry and stores are on shore, also the garden and recreation ground. When the patients left the ships they reached Darenth Camps, after about an hour's drive, mostly up hill. And what a curious life they led in camps! There were two: the male camp lying on high ground (northwards), the female camp lying on lower (southwards). Both lay on the side of a chalky hill, which was crowned by a wood, used for cutting hop poles. Each camp contained about twenty-two tents erected on platforms, set on piers, out from the hill. There were staff and chapels tents, recreation halls, store huts, discharge and receiving rooms, linen stores, and on the male side the clergyman's tent, which he called "St. Edmund's Parsonage," also the steward's office tent; and on the female side the matron's tent. The medical superintendent lived in a house which had been the farm house.

*(To be continued.)*

## PRACTICAL NURSING.

### CHAPTER I.—A SUITABLE NURSE.

THE first consideration in all cases of illness is the selection of a competent and suitable nurse. Great care should be taken to choose a neat, clean, strong person, of fit age and experience to deal successfully with the whims and peculiarities which patients often possess in a wonderful degree, and which must be properly combated. The employment of an efficiently trained and certificated nurse is greatly to be preferred, especially

*previous page*

*next page*