under treatment is already 2,533, although it is only seven weeks since the tide began to turn, while the number of cases of scarlet fever alone, which may be expected to require accommodation simultaneously in the autumn, ranges according to the basis of computation adopted from 4,800 to 6,300.

The cases, however, must be dealt with, the beds must be found, the land must be obtained on which to place the hospitals. The matter is complicated by the fact that every site must be submitted for approval to the Local Government Board, which is not immediately responsible for dealing with the difficulty, which can take its time, and which may veto each suggested site without giving any reason or indicating at all what conditions will be exacted in the future. This question is one of most serious public importance. Take the case of Tottenham as an instance. A site was chosen by the managers and refused by the Local Government Board. Scarlet fever was advancing by leaps and bounds; there was an absolute dearth of beds. At last the Board allowed the purchase of the freehold, but even then would only sanction its use for fever purposes for the space of one year. The necessity of getting beds was, however, absolute, and in seven weeks a hospital for 500 patients sprang into existence. It was a splendid display of energy, a *tour de force*, but at what a cost was the emergency met? A freehold purchased and a hospital built for one year's use.

Take Tooting again. After months of search and investigation, the managers procured a site which they thought eligible in every respect. Again they are refused by the Local Government Board, influenced no doubt by the strong protests made by the inhabitants of the locality.

Now Lewisham is under discussion, and again protests are heard, and, in fact, we may be sure that whatever site be chosen, the immediate neighbours will be certain to know of some better spot, always a little further off. And so, to the clamour of local meetings and the objections of suburban residents, with which it is not difficult to sympathise, the Local Government Board bows. Yet the owners of any of the sites could cover them with pig-styes, or set up an Earl's Court with bands and fireworks every night, and no one could say a word until a nuisance had been proved in court of law. It is urged that if a hospital becomes a nuisance it is liable to ordinary processes of law, why then should the Metropolitan Asylums Board, confessedly acting for the good of London, be more crippled and restricted in the purchase of a site than a Barnum or a pig dealer?

The Metropolitan Asylums Board point out that it has recently been laid down by the unanimous judgment of the Court of Appeal that an owner of land has a right to establish on it a small-pox hospital, and that, provided the hospital be properly conducted, it is not, in the legal sense, a nuisance. If this be so in the case of small pox hospitals, *a fortiori* it is true of fever hospitals, as to which all subsequent experience bears out the conclusion of the Royal Commission of 1882 that "all evidence goes to show that well-conducted fever hospitals involve no appreciable risk in the neighbourhood."

If the managers had a free hand they would increase the number of fever beds at their disposal to a minimum of 4,500, and they would do this by the erection of hospitals built of permanent materials, on large sites, within reach of the people who would use them. Although it is not possible to bring the matter to the test of statistics, owing to the many factors involved, those who have to deal with fever cases, and especially with cases of enteric fever and diphtheria, entertain a strong conviction that any material increase of the distance travelled in the ambulances would tell injuriously on many of the patients. It is essential, then, not to allow the hospitals to be pushed too far out.

If we once make up our minds that, at any rate in this generation, fevers are not likely to be banished from the land, and that in one form or another they will have to be dealt with, permanent hospitals are likely to be more economical in the long run than temporary structures, will certainly be more comfortable to the patients, and will obviate that danger of fire which is a constant and perpetual dread in the minds of those who have to do with wooden buildings.

The sites of the existing hospitals average about ten acres a-piece; twenty acres is what the managers should aim at, so that in epidemic times there would be plenty of room for temporary extension without duplication of administration.

At present, however, the managers are in an *impasse*; beating the air, striving to conform to unknown regulations and unformulated rules, they can get no further. The whole story is one more piece of evidence in favour of the contention that the government of London should be in the hands of one responsible elective body, able to act with the whole public opinion of London at its back, and therefore powerful enough to get its own way.

NOTES ON HEALTH RESORTS.

XIII.—GOSENSASS.

By DAWSON WILLIAMS, M.D.,

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THE number of mountain stations in which arrangements are made for carrying out the method of treatment of certain forms of heart disease by regular exercise, graduated in amount, is now considerable, but it may be worth while to give a short account of a station, rather out of the beaten track, which for this reason may have special attraction for some.

Gossensass is a small village in the Austrian Tyrol. It is on the Brenner Railway, about six miles from the top of the pass on the southern side. The village, which is built on the eastern side of the valley, stands in an open airy situation, opposite the entrance to the Pflerschthal, a side valley closed by lofty mountains and glaciers, of which fine views are obtained. It is 3,480 feet above the sea, and enjoys and suffers from the ordinary characteristics of a mountain climate of medium elevation, but with the advantage that it is in the summer a little more genial than some of the Swiss stations. It is essentially a summer station, and during June, July, and August, the number of fine days is high. In the immediate neighbourhood of the village the valley on both sides of the Eisack is traversed by well made footpaths, and by choosing judiciously the pedestrian may have sun or shade at any time of a sunny day. The paths were selected and marked out in quarter-hour distances some years ago under the direction of Professor Oertel, and range from a level path along the banks of the river to the ascension of the Hühnerspiel, which may be attempted by those who have recovered so completely as to be able to face a climb of 5,500 feet.

There is a well managed hotel (Hotel Gröbner) where the charges are reasonable; the manner of living is that generally observed in Germany, but there is also a restaurant where English habits as to hours of meals are recognised.

Gossensass is reached in about two hours from Innsbruck, and it has the advantage to those who intend to winter in Italy that it is on the through line, by Botzen, to Verona.

INQUIRY INTO THE SANITARY CONDITION OF LONDON THEATRES.

IN the introductory paragraph of the first of the series of articles now appearing in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL on the above subject, it is stated that "hitherto no systematic inspection of these places of amusement has been undertaken to discover what the conditions really are with a view to having them remedied." We were not ourselves aware when this introductory paragraph appeared that Mr. Lennox Browne had two or three years ago made an inspection as to the sanitary condition of certain London and provincial theatres, and had read a paper on the subject at the Seventh International Congress of Hygiene and Demography held in London in August, 1891. Had we been aware of it we should willingly have made an acknowledgment of the paper in question at the time, and should certainly have done so long before this had not Mr. Lennox Browne four days after the first article appeared, commenced proceedings against the Editor of the JOURNAL for an injunction. This injunction was moved before Mr. Justice Stirling on May 30th, and has been dismissed. We are quite ready to give Mr. Lennox Browne credit for anything which he has done, and have

¹ The "pension" price (rooms and board) last year was about equivalent to 6 frs.; the *vin du pays*, an excellent table wine, is sold by measure at an extremely reasonable rate. It may be as well to add, as Gossensass is not mentioned in recent editions of Bradshaw's Railway Guide, that all fast trains stop there during the summer months.