

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF TYPHOID FEVER.

We reprint the following sensible observations says the *Sanitary Record* from an article bearing the above title, which was published in the *Builder* for August :

The medical profession is the natural guardian of the public health. It is so *ex officio*. But it is more than that. A large acquaintance with many of the brightest ornaments of the medical profession, in and out of the British isles, leads to the certain conviction that the preservation of the health, not only of his patients, but of his neighbours, townsfolk, countrymen, is a motive that presses on the life of the doctor with unslumbered force. No offence need be taken by the members of any other class and calling if we attribute to our physicians and cultivated men of medical science and practice a degree of active and disinterested beneficence to which it is hard to find a parallel elsewhere. And it is to this that the appeal must now be made. It is this willing horse that we have to spur. We must call on our physicians and family doctors to do some violence to their professional or personal delicacy of feeling in the interest of the common weal. There is little doubt that, as a rule, the higher are the intellectual and professional qualifications of the physician, the less is he disposed to volunteer advice. When he is consulted, he must, no doubt probe the case of his patient to the bottom. And so he does ; and in exact proportion, as far as our own experience extends, to the real value of the time of a physician, measured by quarters of an hour, is his apparent utter disregard to the lapse of time while he is investigating the symptoms, or listening to the complaints of a patient. But here the limit is drawn. Into the circumstances and habits of that patient, unless as they bear directly on the very point of his complaint, the physician shuns to pry. At times, indeed—all honour to them for the same—men of large practice will put some delicate or circuitous question as to the ability of a patient to pay golden fees without inconvenience ; but solely with the view of remitting or reducing such fees in case of real need. But if a man goes to consult a physician, say as to the state of his heart, the physician will not be likely to question him as to the condition of his scullery or his sink.

We very much fear that we shall have more royal, noble, and even medical victims to typhoid infection, unless the profession somewhat change their hand in this matter. It will be remembered that we are now more especially referring to the condition of connections with the sewers, and the escape into a house, or the water used to drink—as at Marlborough House, the War Office, and the Admiralty Offices—of that subtle and deadly gas which bears the germs of this disease, or at least, sets up the abnormal action which ultimately takes that form. It is to be expected, no doubt, that if called in to a typhoid case, the doctor will make some inquiry ; just, as, if he were called in to a case of consumption, he would inquire as to the