

Collie, Medical Superintendent of Homerton Hospital, declared that "the only way in which nurses become seasoned against fever is by taking the disease." At Homerton, Stockwell, and Liverpool Road Fever Hospitals, in the ten years ending 1881, 133 of the staff were attacked by various fevers, and 25 died. The Gateshead Medical Officer wrote: "Every nurse who has been more than a fortnight in the typhus wards has suffered from typhus." In Newcastle in 1882 only 5 out of 14 nurses escaped typhus, and among the 9 attacks there were two deaths. In the Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board in 1887-95, no fewer than 704 of the attendants contracted scarlet fever, diphtheria, or enteric fever.

How is it as regards small-pox? At Homerton Hospital in 1871-77 366 persons were employed. All but one was revaccinated and she was the only one who took small-pox. In the Highgate Hospital the Royal Commission found that since May, 1883, of 137 nurses and attendants 30 had had small-pox before entering the service. Of the other 107 all except the gardener were revaccinated, and the gardener was the only one who took small-pox. In the Sheffield hospitals, in the year ending 31st March, 1888, there were treated 1,798 small-pox patients. The total number of attendants, etc., was 161. Of these 18 had had small-pox previously and escaped attack; 63 had been vaccinated in infancy, of whom six were attacked and one died; the other 80 were successfully revaccinated, and not one contracted small-pox. In Leicester, however, where vaccination is neglected, some of the nurses refused revaccination. In the outbreak there the total hospital staff consisted of 40 persons. Of these 14 had either had small-pox or had been revaccinated before the outbreak, and 20 were vaccinated owing to the outbreak. Among these 34 (14 and 20) one mild case occurred in a nurse whose revaccination was ten years old. Six of the 40 nurses appear to have been imbued with anti-vaccination opinions, and refused revaccination. Only one of the six now needs any protection against small-pox. Five of them took it and one died.

5. In places where small-pox prevails it attacks a much greater proportion of the unvaccinated than of the vaccinated, especially where the vaccinations are comparatively recent.

In the Homerton Small-pox Hospital in over 10,000 cases treated by Dr. Gayton nearly 21 per cent. were unvaccinated, and among children under 10 the unvaccinated were no less than 47.6 per cent. The unvaccinated at this time (1873-84) in the population from which the cases were drawn did not amount nearly to 21 per cent. much less to 47 per cent. On the other hand, there is one hospital (Highgate) which does not admit children under seven and which draws its patients from a more universally vaccinated section of the population, and this hospital differed from others in London in that the percentage of unvaccinated patients was found to be much less, the difference being due to the difference in the ages of admitted cases, and the difference in the prevalence of vaccination in the population from which cases came.