

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



THE Duke of SUTHERLAND has accepted the presidency of the Hospital for Diseases of the Throat, Golden Square, W.

A LEGACY of £5,000 has been bequeathed by the late Mr. W. INGHAM WHITAKER to the Hospital Sunday Fund.

THE St. John Ambulance Association has forwarded, through its Cape Town Centre, a supply of stores to Buluwayo (Matabeleland), where ambulance classes are being formed for the police force stationed there.

AN interesting article appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, on the 12th inst., concerning the Vienna "First Aid" Society to the Wounded and Dying, in which it describes, at length, Baron MUNDY's wonderful organisation for the ambulance service in Vienna. The "Special Commissioner" states:—

I enjoyed the privilege of an interesting conversation the other day at Baden with this Red Cross hero of many battlefields. Jaromir Mundy is a Moravian by birth. He graduated in medicine at Wurtzburg, in Bavaria, and for 15 years afterwards gave particular attention to the care of the insane. For several years he resided in England. Afterwards he commenced the study of military hygiene, and by personal care advanced to a high stage of efficiency the means and methods for the "aid" treatment of the wounded, sick and diseased soldiers. He has participated in no less than fourteen great military campaigns. He is not tall in stature; he has possessed untiring energy, and after residing in many lands has become a fluent linguist.

I did not feel inclined to question this savant during the interview, but listened to his advice. "London," said he, "is urgently in need of a 'First Aid' Society, and why one has not been founded ere this is to me incomprehensible. Two years ago the Prince of Wales visited our central establishment in Vienna, and was greatly impressed and pleased. Such an Institution, he remarked to me, was greatly needed in London, and should be at once carried into effect. Certain steps were afterwards taken, I understand," continued Baron Mundy, "under the Prince of Wales's advice, but the matter fell through because the right men to organize and conduct were not to be found. I am an old man now, over 70 years of age, and invalided; otherwise I should at once proceed to London, and do what is necessary myself."

"What would your programme be?" I inquired.

WHY SHOULD LONDON WAIT?

"I should commence operations in one parish only, and confine the 'First Aid' within its limits. After six months' organizing I should be already at work. Very little is really necessary. What? Two rooms, one for the medical staff and bearers, the other for the temporary reception of the sick and wounded. One surgeon, medical student volunteers,

two ambulance waggons, with coachmen and bearers, and the necessary stretchers, &c., for transport. This central Institution, on exactly the same lines as that of Vienna, an organization that has worked without a hitch for twelve years, would cost no more than £1,000 yearly. Now, what is a trifling sum of this amount to the wealthy inhabitants of a London parish?"

"London streets," continued Baron Mundy, "are as dangerous, to quote the well-known remark, to human life as a battlefield. It is really sad to think of the acute suffering to humanity caused by the want of prompt and efficient transport. To recall the oft-repeated scene of the kind-hearted metropolitan policeman with the street sweeper-boy lying beneath him with a broken leg, vainly endeavouring to hail a disengaged cab, or begging the owner of a passing vehicle to convey the little sufferer to the nearest Hospital—to think of such aggravated scenes makes me assert that the man who can institute such a 'First Aid' Society throughout the length and breadth of that mighty London deserves a public monument erected to perpetuate his memory. I need say no more. Vienna has shown London the example. The matter is very simple to carry out, for a complete model to follow exists here."

The mantle of the illustrious Baron has fallen on the shoulders of Dr. Wilhelm von Vragassy, the present chief surgeon and director of the "First Aid" Society. The neat two-storied building of the central institution, with its small and pretty gardens on either wing in the Stuben Ring Strasse, is a familiar object to the Viennese. I paid a call there afterwards, to have a chat with the chief surgeon, a "pure-bred Hungarian," as he jocularly said he was, while M. Kaskeline busied himself sketching the interesting points of the establishment.

The medical staff, I learned, consisted of six members, including the chief surgeon. They all live in the Institution. There are as helpers 195 University medical students in their "third year." Five of these volunteers are ever "on duty" throughout a stretch of twenty-four hours, from 8 p.m. until 8 p.m. the next evening. They dine in the "Mannschaft-zimmer," and there they also sleep at night. The remaining 190 students reside out, and though their services are always available in event of great catastrophes occurring, they only take "a turn on duty" *once* in four weeks. These students are chosen on their application by the chief surgeon.

There are six "bearers," nine horses in the stables, in the huge depository twenty-nine waggons of all descriptions; from the magazine waggon used for carrying medical material to scenes where life has been lost in great numbers, to the cooking waggon with stove and utensils to turn out in one hour soups and "gulyas" (*i.e.*, stews) sufficient for 600 persons! This is for use at inundations. On the ground floor of the building itself are the following rooms:—The receiving, bath, student staff, coffee, servants', and store room. The rooms above are occupied by the resident surgeons.

Outside two ambulance waggons stand ready horsed, with the drivers on the "boxes." One side of the waggon opens upwards, displaying the stretcher, with its pillow for the patient, securely swung on straps. There are two seats at the foot and head of this stretcher, one for the surgeon and the other for the medical student. The bearer rides on the "box" with the coachman. Only the living are "aided" and transported to the hospital. The dead cannot be handled or removed. In July last, 536 cases were treated. The yearly expenditure is £8,000, obtained entirely by voluntary contributions. "Ready, aye ready," are the workers in this

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