

Purification of Sewage." The chair will be taken by Sir Benjamin Baker, K.C.M.G., Pres. Inst.C.E., LL.D., F.R.S.

The returns presented at Saturday's fortnightly meeting of the Metropolitan Asylums Board showed that the number of fever patients in the hospitals of the Board was 3,551, an increase of 11 compared with the previous fortnight. The number of smallpox patients was 87, an increase of six.

An illuminated address and a purse of money—the cheque being for £3,300—was presented to Dr. Barnardo at Exeter Hall on Tuesday. The presentation, which is a jubilee offering, was made, on behalf of the subscribers, by the Marquis of Lorne.

The inmates of the Hospital for Epilepsy and Paralysis, Regent's Park, were again, on Friday the 15th inst., provided with an excellent entertainment organised by the Matron, Miss Miriam Ridley; who, with the help of her friends, supplied a programme which was highly appreciated and afforded a delightful evening's amusement. Songs by Miss Howison, Miss F. R. Orgill, Miss M. Elgood and Messrs. C. Biddle and J. W. Myler, together with violin solos by Miss Maud Rooke, and piano solos by Dr. Althaus, were diversified by recitations by Mr. H. J. Hunter. Miss Osborne's aid as accompanist was of course invaluable, and Messrs. S. & P. Erard kindly lent one of their well-known instruments as on former occasions.

The ratepayers and Guardians of Islington are much perplexed and hampered in their efforts by the continued opposition of the Local Government Board to the plans for the proposed extension of Infirmary accommodation. The Guardians desire to acquire a site in St. John's Road—the Local Government Board wishes to force them to Bowes Park. The latter locality, being so far removed from Islington, whence the patients would be drawn, would involve a calculated expenditure on ambulance of about £800 a year. Added to this, the sum spent on labour in the Infirmary for cleaning, &c., amounts to some £1,125 annually. At present, a large number of these workers are taken from the Union, and in all cases are women who have been in receipt of parish relief. Now, if the Infirmary be so far separate from the Union, pauper help will be impossible, and the women whose employment now keeps themselves and families will, in many cases, again be thrown upon the rates. Added to which there would be the travelling expenses of the Committee, each member being entitled (in case of the proposed removal to Bowes Park), to 5s. a visit. It is hoped that some more practical scheme than the removal to Bowes Park will be suggested, or that the Local Government Board will withdraw their objection to the St. John's Road proposal.

The Medical Staff Corps are sending out to Ashanti nearly 100 non-commissioned officers and men in one detachment. They are to be instructed in the use of the new Pasteur filter.

A prospectus has been issued of Siddons House, a Hospital which it is proposed to found for the exclusive use of *bond-fide* actors and actresses. As soon as funds permit, a suitable house and grounds in London will be secured; and only £2,000 is asked to meet the expenses of establishing, furnishing, and working a five-bed hospital for two years. The terms of admission will be a minimum yearly subscription of 5s.; beyond this, the only charge will be 12s. 6d. a week for diet while under treatment. It is estimated that at least 2,800 subscriptions of 5s. a year will be necessary; and it is suggested that subscribers of £2 2s. and upwards per annum shall be entitled to send one recommendatory letter a year for the admission of a non-paying patient, and that donors of £50 shall have the same privilege for life. Subscriptions and donations should be made payable to Major-General A. L. Playfair, at the Haymarket Theatre. Mr. Tree has very kindly offered to give a special *matinée* at the Haymarket on Monday, December 16th.

## Our Foreign Letter.

### A RIVAL TO THE LATE M. PASTEUR.— THE SHRINE OF ST. HUBERT.

PASTEUR has only just died, but he had a rival who forestalled him by over ten centuries, in St. Hubert, the Apostle of the Ardennes, the Patron Saint of Hunters, the Christian Diana, the Specialist of Hydrophobia.

Though Shakespeare made it the trysting place of Orlando and Rosalind—"The fair, the chaste, the unexpressive she"—and Scott, the happy hunting ground and scene of Quentin Durward's adventures, yet the charms of the great Ardennes Forest are comparatively little known to the English.

But besides its literary flavour, this great district has other characteristics—traditions and dogs. Both are much *en evidence*. Every cottage, every farm, every cart, every truck, every herd of cattle, is guarded by its Cerberus-like dog, savagely suspicious of even the gentle, unprovocative tourists tramping along. What wonder, then, that with nerves quivering after many an exciting adventure with dogs on some lonely hill top, or quiet river valley, we made our way to the Shrine of St. Hubert, the pivot of many quaint traditions and curious customs.

The Abbey Church of St. Hubert, cathedral-like in proportion, Gothic in design, is surrounded by a sleepy old village buried away in the hoary heart of the Forest whose trees are "moss'd with age" and high tops "bald with dry antiquity."

Hubert was passionately fond of hunting, even to the neglect of his devotions. One day, whilst in the midst of the chase, he was struck by a vision: a stag appeared with a bright cross between its horns, and a voice called upon him to repent. Not only did he repent, but he eventually became a Bishop. Even to this day, the spot where this wonderful conversion took place is shown. But even after this upheaval in his life, he always retained a warm interest in hunters. Though his body, buried on the spot where the Abbey stands, has been lost since the troubles of the French Revolution, his sacred stole, possessed, in cases of dog-bites, of miraculous power, reputed to be undiminished even by the lapse of centuries, is jealously guarded, along with other relics, in the Treasury or Sacristy. Thither, in the "dog days," come pilgrims from all parts to be touched by this garment.

That faith is strong in Belgium may, in some degree be gauged by the fact that it was only about five years ago that the Antwerp Provincial Council passed a resolution that a sum of money should be given to poor persons who had been dog-bitten to enable them to seek for cure either at the hands of Pasteur, in Paris, or at the Shrine of St. Hubert. The science of the nineteenth century and the miraculous virtues embodied in a coat in the ninth, was all one to the Antwerp Council.

In the system of "religious therapeutics" practised at St. Hubert's, there are two operations to cure hydrophobia—*la taille*, the incision, and *le repit* or the *neuvaine*, that is, rest and prayer for nine days. The patient is expected to attend the early morning Mass, in order that he may be in "a state of grace." He then proceeds with the priest to the sacristy, where the priceless stole is kept, and kneels down on a sort of *prie-dieu*. The priest, wearing appropriately a green stole, recites a formal ritual, and the patient, having repeated a short prayer, holds his head back,

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