

some instances absolutely dependent upon public subscriptions for their very existence, while, on the other hand, there is a Fund possessed of large resources and able to give great pecuniary assistance, it is inevitable that the Committee of management of the latter must obtain a very large amount of authority over the former institutions. We are therefore justified in predicting that the Committee of the new Fund will in a very short time acquire a more powerful control over the Metropolitan Hospitals than it was ever expected that the proposed Central Board would possess. We take it for granted that this authority will be exercised in a manner beyond criticism or reflection; but our point is that the new authority thus created must inevitably tend, hereafter, to become more and more absolute. In other words, the Committee of the Fund will become the Central Hospital Board—for which a certain section of theorists have been working so hard, and against which a considerable number of those acquainted with the difficulties of hospital management have so actively protested—and, as we have said, with such controlling powers as no Central Board has ever yet been proposed to be entrusted with. Indeed, it is well-known that the various schemes for the formation of such a Board have hitherto fallen through in consequence of the powerful opposition evinced on the part of hospital authorities.

It is quite realised in the Hospital world that the Central Board has been created by a *coup de main*, and that the various safeguards which were admitted to be necessary in the schemes previously suggested, are conspicuously absent from its constitution. Those who, like ourselves, are independent onlookers, will watch with the greatest interest to see what course the opposition will adopt. At present, the marked absence of public comment with which Hospital managers have received the scheme is highly significant of the stunned sense of surprise which it has caused.

The Committee nominated by the Prince of Wales consists for the most part of eminent gentlemen who have little or no acquaintance with hospital matters, and this is undoubtedly a serious disadvantage in a body which may be called upon to exercise controlling authority over institutions which require very accurate knowledge and special experience for the complete understanding of their work.

If the Fund had been merely of a tempo-

rary character—that is to say, if it had proposed merely to collect in this year of Jubilee, a large sum of money to be allotted to the various hospitals of the Metropolis, and in each case to be invested to provide some permanent memorial of Her Majesty, nothing could have been better than the Committee appointed to assist His Royal Highness. But it is in the permanent character which it is proposed the Fund should assume that grave difficulties will be found to exist.

Lectures on Elementary Physiology, in relation to Medical Nursing.

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LECTURE V.—THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

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SOME of the most distressing cases which the nurse has to attend upon are those in which gradually advancing disease of the spinal cord causes a gradual failure of the bodily powers. For example, in the disease known as Locomotor Ataxy, the train of symptoms, once developed, almost invariably progresses slowly from bad to worse, as the disease extends through the substance of the spinal cord. And this affection, therefore, is typical of others in the same region. The distinctive feature in this disease is what is called a loss of "co-ordination"; that is to say, the various muscles required to perform a given movement do not act together as they do in health; and consequently the movements appear to be purposeless and erratic, instead of being orderly and effective. The typical sign of the disease is the inability of the patient to walk in the ordinary manner. Instead of the muscles of the thigh contracting and lifting the foot forward, and then the muscles of the leg and the thigh fixing the foot firmly on the ground and drawing the body forward whilst the same movements are repeated by the other limb, the leg is, so to speak, flung forward by irregular muscular action, then it is often jerked back again, instead of being placed in advance of the body; then the trunk is lunched to one side or the other, and the legs make spasmodic efforts to retain the balance. The consequence is that many persons suffering from Locomotor Ataxy are believed by strangers to be suffering from intoxication; the dis-

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