

The Rev. John Conmee, S.J., preached the Annual Charity Sermon in aid of the National Maternity Hospital, in the Church of St. Andrew, Dublin. He took for his text, "Look thou on me, and have pity on me, for I am alone and poor; deliver me from my necessities, see my abjection and my labour, and forgive me my sins," and said manywise things. Amongst them he told his audience "if they wanted to estimate the comparative claims of different forms of human misery upon them, they would find that the essential element and differentiation was the helplessness of the hapless victims. It was not the actual loss suffered, however intense or extensive; it was not failure, however great—failure of fortune, failure of friends, loss of sense, or faculty of mind or body. All these things might happen and yet leave behind a residue of strength or power or resource, and noble natures shrank from asking help if they had saved from the wreck of fortune or health wherewithal to eke out a subsistence of any sort. But helplessness and incapacity to do anything for oneself established a right to claim their help; that gave their poor brother or sister a right to call on them, and to demand that help which they could not refuse without the sacrifice of principle and honour. Now, the charity for which he appealed that day appeared to him to have, beyond all question, in the case of its objects, more of the elements of pure helplessness than any other that he knew. Every act of charity, every relief given by the Maternity Hospital in the discharge of its functions, relieved at once two helpless human beings—a helpless mother and her helpless child—a helpless mother, helpless in the extremity of actual suffering and in peril of her life, and a new-born babe, struggling, poor thing, to keep alive, if it may, the little flickering spark of existence that has just been given to it."

The Leprosy Conference held its first sitting last Monday at Berlin, when there was a large and representative attendance of medical men, university professors, and officials of the Public Health Department. Professor Virchow, the discoverer of leprosy cells, was in the chair, and in an interesting speech welcomed the foreign delegates. Delegates from most European countries were present, as well as from the United States, Japan, the West Indies, Chili, and Hawaii. Dr. Bosse, Minister of Public Health, expressed the interest taken by the Government in the proceedings of the Congress. Amongst the speakers were also Dr. Hansen, from Stockholm, the discoverer of the leprosy bacillus, and Dr. Ehlers, from Copenhagen, whose work among the Iceland lepers is well known. The proceedings were of a most interesting character, isolation as a means of coping with leprosy being strongly advocated.

The *Daily Mail* says—"In a public lecture, delivered at Monte Video on June 11th, Dr. Sanarelli announced that he had discovered the bacillus of yellow fever, and would shortly begin experiments in preventive vaccination with the view of discovering a curative serum. Since then, his researches have been officially recognized by the Brazilian Government. A laboratory has been built for him at the expense of the republic, and the Brazilian Congress recently voted a large sum of money to defray the expenses necessitated by his experiments."

A Jamaica telegram, published in a New York paper, reports that an outbreak of yellow fever has occurred in the island, and is spreading rapidly. The outbreak, it is stated, has been most virulent amongst the European soldiers, who have been seized with panic. The telegram declares that the authorities at Jamaica have endeavoured to conceal the facts.

The accounts of malaria in Central Asia are very distressing. Great ravages are being caused by it among the population of Tashkent, especially in the Asiatic quarter of the town, the inhabitants of which are said to be dying like flies. This malady is considered a worse scourge even than cholera, because a visitation of the latter is of limited duration, and after having destroyed its quota of victims passes away, leaving the survivors with unimpaired constitutions. The malaria, however, has been prevalent for the past four years, and while also causing a heavy mortality, estimated at several thousands, leaves the survivors physically exhausted, broken in health, and incapacitated for work. It seems almost impossible to cope with the disease. At Merv, for instance, the most stringent and radical measures have been taken to stamp out the malady, but without success, and it has been found necessary to transfer the Russian garrison of that town to Krasnovodsk, in order to preserve it from complete destruction.

Our Foreign Letter.

NURSING POLITICS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

(By our Special Correspondent.)



It is not too much to say that the officials of the hospitals in New South Wales, which are controlled or subsidized by the Government, have been convulsed for weeks past over the "eight-hour day for nurses." The nurses themselves in the Colony are very much like they are at home, far too busy attending to their routine duties to take any active part in the controversy; they simply stand aside and say, "Leave us alone—we don't want to be bothered;" and, indeed, as at home, their economic position is a delicate matter. The hospitals are crowded with candidates for training, and the plums of the profession are few and far between; so, as usual in women's questions, it is "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost." So things drift. But I am bound to say that where a nurse has advanced an opinion it is strongly against a compulsory eight-hour day; reason, "Because the patients will suffer." Legislation for nurses has, however, been hotly debated in the Assembly, and the following report from the *Sydney Telegraph* may interest your readers, especially as the eight-hour principle is to be adopted "where possible." From the gist of the debate you will no doubt "point the moral" that, had

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