

The Council of the Sanitary Institute has accepted an invitation from the Lord Mayor and City Council of Birmingham to hold its Seventeenth Congress and Exhibition in that city, in September next.

A subscription has been started on the Stock Exchange for the London Hospital, and the sum contributed already amounts to £4000 from about a hundred subscribers.

The Bishop of London will take the chair at a dinner to be held at the Hôtel Métropole, on Thursday, April 28th, in aid of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, when a special appeal will be made for £30,000 for the purchase of the adjoining hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth.

Dr. Dawson Williams is the new editor of the *British Medical Journal*. It is now over seventeen years since Dr. Williams joined the staff of the *Journal*, and during Mr. Hart's frequent tours abroad he has acted effectively as deputy.

A deputation consisting of representatives of medical licensing bodies in the three kingdoms has waited upon the Secretary of State for War, representing to him the serious state of the Army Medical Department. The deputation urged the granting of military titles, and the formation of an Army Medical Corps. Lord Lansdowne concurred with the concern evinced by the deputation as to the serious condition of the Army Medical Staff.

Following a recent example, Mrs. Lawrie has forwarded to the Secretary of the British Home for Incurables, Streatham, a cheque for £1000, to establish the "Menella 'In Memoriam' Bed" in the Home, in the hope that others may be induced to help the charity in a similar manner.

The Mayor of King's Lynn is appealing in the *Times* for further subscriptions to the relief fund for typhoid cases in that town. The funds at his disposal are now reduced to the last hundred pounds, and the need for continuing to relieve the sufferers from the epidemic is still urgent, while the committee have been quite unable, through lack of funds, to deal with the widows and orphans.

The following medical practitioners have been selected for temporary plague duty in India, and left London on Wednesday last:—

- Miss M. M. T. Christie, M.D.Lond., B.Sc.Lond.
- Miss A. M. Corthorn, M.B., B.S.Lond.
- Dr. H. D. N. Mackenzie, M.D.Edin., C.M.
- Mr. G. J. Blackmore, M.B., C.M.Edin.
- Mr. G. W. Smith, M.B.Lond., M.R.C.S.Eng., L.R.C.P.Lond.
- Dr. C. T. Parsons, L.S.A., M.D.Lond., M.D. State Medicine, Lond. Univ.
- Dr. F. G. Clemow, M.D.Edin., D.P.H.Cantab.
- Mr. W. A. Justice, M.B., C.M.Aberd., D.P.H. Cantab.
- Mr. R. W. Hornabrook, M.R.C.S.Eng., L.R.C.P.Lond., M.B., B.S.Adelaide.
- Mr. E. E. R. Laing, L.R.C.P.Edin., L.R.C.S.Edin., L.F.P. & S.Glasg.

Review.

"WORKHOUSES AND PAUPERISM."

WE have received from Messrs. Methuen, of 36, Essex Street, Strand, a copy of "Workhouses and Pauperism," by Miss Louisa Twining, a most interesting record of Miss Twining's own work in the cause of Poor Law reform as well as that of many other women, for it must, we think, be conceded that women have played an active part in initiating and carrying out Poor Law reforms. The names of Mary Carpenter, Frances Power Cobbe, Mrs. Sheppard, Miss Berwick, Miss Elliott, Miss Tucker, Miss Joanna Hill, Mrs. Nassau Senior, and many others stand out conspicuously in this relation, and to them, as well as to Miss Twining, one of the most earnest and earliest of the Poor Law workers, women owe a debt of gratitude both for the work which they have accomplished and for the practical demonstration of the earnest purpose and resolute insistence upon reforms, which is characteristic of their sex, when once their conscience has been aroused.

The most interesting part of the book, however, to the readers of the *NURSING RECORD*, is that which deals with workhouse nursing, and to this we propose to devote the space at our disposal. It was in 1866 that a public meeting was held at Willis's Rooms, of the "Association for the Improvement of London Workhouse Infirmaries," and in the same year this Association reprinted "An account of the condition of the Infirmaries of London Workhouses" from the *Fortnightly Review*, which was written by the late Mr. Ernest Hart, one of the secretaries of the Association. It is noticeable that twenty-seven years ago the rule was laid down that "one trained nurse, adequately paid, should have general charge of the Hospital and Infirmary."

The description of the Strand Workhouse in 1855 is appalling. The Master was "a man who might have been the original of Bumble" in "Oliver Twist." The "nurses" were pauper inmates, usually infirm, and more often drunk than sober, who were remunerated for their services by an amended dietary and a glass of beer, to which was added a glass of gin when their duties were peculiarly repulsive. The ward for fevers and foul cases contained but two beds, and was separated from a tinker's shop by a lath and plaster partition only eight feet high. It was altogether unfit for the reception of any human being, however degraded he might be—but it had to be used. In this ward a poor man with frost-bitten feet, which speedily mortified, died of tetanus, only to be followed almost immediately by the attendant, who contracted, while nursing him, a most malignant form of blood poisoning.

We read also that at St. Giles's there was a court "for the sick," whether men or women.

Again, we hear, at the Kensington Workhouse Miss Twining found, upon the smell of the dustbins being complained of, that all rubbish was put into one receptacle, with an open grating in the door for ventilation, just below the lying-in ward and other sick wards. It is characteristic that it was a woman who insisted upon this condition of things being altered. Of a male colleague Miss Twining writes:—"One of the guardians was very reluctant to join us, but I begged him to do so, and really *made* him come, and he now says 'that was a grand bit of work we did with the dustbin!'" Why is it, we wonder, that the male sex are always so ready to let bad as well as good alone,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)