

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



THE Prince of Wales has consented to lay the foundation-stone of a new Royal Infirmary at Newcastle-on-Tyne on June 20, the day of the Queen's Accession.

The Duke of Cambridge has consented to lay the foundation-stone of the new wing of the Victoria Hospital, Folkestone, on Saturday, the 26th inst.

Dr. Blyth, the medical officer of health and analyst for St. Marylebone, mentions in his last report, as proof of the instinctive discriminating power possessed by mice, that these intelligent little animals are able to distinguish between margarine and butter. In the court-house laboratory they never attack the remnants of samples of margarine, but are very fond of butter.

Our ever vigilant contemporary the *Lancet* has been submitting the new half-penny green postage stamp to some chemical tests, and the results are of interest:

The colouring consists, we found, of a mixture of Prussian blue and a chrome color. There is no lead present or arsenic or any other mineral irritant. In short we could find nothing in the colouring to which objection could be taken considering how common the practice of licking stamps is. We also examined the gum and found it to consist of the so-called British Gum which is obtained from starch. From the point of view of the chemistry of the new stamp, there is no reason to suppose that it contains injurious substances, and therefore licking would be harmless. But the bacteriology of the stamp has to be reckoned with, and that postage stamps are liable to be infected with pathogenic organisms admits of little doubt.

Indeed, we are told that cases have been reported in which blood poisoning has set up from applying the tongue to the gum. Moral: never lick postage stamps.

Speaking at the annual public meeting of the Liberation Society, Mr. Augustine Birrell, Q.C., M.P., remarked that Establishment had proved itself to be the best opiate which the wisdom of man had ever devised to administer to the Church. In further remarks he said he had been pained several times when he went into the House of Lords to hear a coarse-minded brewer tell the head of the Church of England in that Chamber to mind his own business when he had been speaking upon the temperance question, and he asked how long would such men of light and leading and faith and force in the Church of England be allowed to be subjected to such intolerable behaviour?

In the presence of a large and interested company, Countess Spencer, on Friday, laid the memorial stone of a nursing institute which is being erected in Northampton at a cost of something like £4,000, in commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Earl Spencer, in replying to a vote of thanks to the countess, referred to the great changes which had been made during the Queen's reign in arrangements for the care of our sick and suffering.

At the annual meeting of Governors of the General Hospital, Nottingham, Sir Charles Seely moved the adoption of the report of the Extension Committee, which was as follows:—"The committee are glad to be able to report that good progress has been made with the work at the new wing since the last report. The committee hope that it will be ready for occupation in the autumn." Sir Charles was glad to add a statement as to the finances for the convenience of the governors. The committee did not put it into the report because they had received no subscriptions since the last report, and consequently it was not necessary to embody it, but it would no doubt be agreeable to the governors to know how the finances stood. They had received from subscriptions £30,645, and in interest £1,881, making a total of £32,527. The total payments had been £10,167, leaving a balance of £22,359. From that ought to be deducted the amount which was due on the Extension Fund (£1,1300), which the governors would remember was kept separately. Practically speaking, the committee had £20,000 at their disposal, but the whole of that amount would be required for the completion of the work. He hoped as many governors as possible would go over the new wing before they left, and that they would be pleased with its appearance. He thought it was going on in a way that would give the greatest possible satisfaction, and that it would be not only a most sanitary and comfortable building for the patients—which was the main point to consider—but also an adornment to the great city of Nottingham, and a very worthy memorial of the Diamond Jubilee of the Sovereign. The committee had had under their consideration the munificent offer of Mr. Robinson for a new wing, and the plan was submitted to Mr. Robinson by Mr. Waterhouse, but it did not quite meet with Mr. Robinson's approval, and the matter had been deferred. It was now under consideration between Mr. Robinson and the committee. The great difficulty was the finding of a site on which a wing of the character which Mr. Robinson wished could be put, but Mr. Robinson and the committee were trying their best to find a way out of the difficulty.

Mr. H. R. Thorpe seconded the report, and it was carried.

A sort of medical insurance company has been organised in Paris for the Exhibition. Doctors of every nationality are "on tap," and a call on the telephone will produce a doctor of almost any nationality by the sick man's bedside at a moment's notice. The "insurance" idea is carried out by the issue of tickets costing from 10fr. to 75fr.

The *New York Herald*, Paris edition, publishes a despatch from Port Said, stating that a large crowd of persons, chiefly Italians and Greeks, have defended a house in the European quarter behind the Roman Catholic Church, and successfully resisted all attempts to remove a suspected case. They shamefully insulted the Italian Consul and other authorities. The mob asserted that the people taken to the hospital were poisoned there, and much indignation was expressed against the Greek doctor, who announced the existence of the plague. Later a European doctor visited the house, and declared that the illness of the patient was not plague. The mob thereupon dispersed.

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