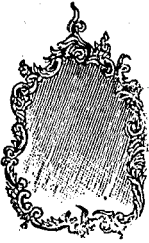


Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



THE PRINCESS OF WALE has forwarded for the benefit of the Inmates of the British Home and Hospital for Incurables at Streatham, a most acceptable present of Pheasants, Partridges, Hares, and Rabbits, this Charity being the first in this country to receive the Patronage of Her Royal Highness.

The Salvation Army has just issued a report of its Social Work in the United Kingdom for the past year. The reports take the form of a series of unvarnished but nevertheless thrilling stories taken from life, in which the facts are largely left to speak for themselves—which they do, it must be admitted, very effectually. Taken as a whole, the review of the work done unfolds a record of successful effort on behalf of the outcast, criminal, and poverty-stricken portions of the community, which is not only wonderful, but which must, we think, be very encouraging to those who actually have the work in hand. The stories told reveal in some instances depths of misery that are truly appalling.

Speaking at a meeting held under the auspices of the Charity Organisation Society, at which Mr. Nelson Hardy read a Paper on "Hospital Abuse in Continental Towns." Dr. Knowsley Sibley said many abuses prevailed in England which could not exist on the Continent, and no real progress could be hoped for until a central hospital board was formed which would deal with the management of all hospitals. The Prince of Wales' Hospital Fund had done a certain amount of investigation into hospital management, and although they gave plenty of notice as to the holding of the inquiry a certain amount of good had been done.

In this connection we are informed by several reliable hospital officials that the Prince's Fund, if conducted on past lines, will completely ruin and "snuff out" London's Special Hospitals, many of which are now merely living from hand to mouth. Some hospital secretaries consider that financial support has been diverted by the Fund from the small, but not less useful, charities—to augment the donations of thousands—distributed to the general hospitals with medical schools.

The North-Eastern Hospital for Children has received a donation of £10 10s. from the Westminster Fire Office, given in recognition of the services rendered by the hospital staff in preventing the spreading of a serious fire in Goldsmith Row on November 4th.

We have received a copy of the Hopetoun souvenir, which has been published by the Commonwealth Publishing and Advertising Company, Limited, as a memento of the banquet given to the Earl of Hopetoun on the eve of his departure to Australia to fulfil the duties of Governor General of the Australian Commonwealth. It is a beautiful production, and contains some of the finest views in the Colonies, as well as some excellent photographs of the Earl's estates in Scotland.

The Croydon Controversy.

BELOW THE BELT.

At a meeting of the Croydon Guardians held on Tuesday last, the Chairman read the following letter from a nurse whose name he withheld. Nothing could more effectively prove the weakness of the case of the Croydon Guardians, than that they should attempt to vindicate their much criticised action by an anonymous letter, the writer of which had never been a member of their nursing staff.

Bedford House, Hastings, 5th December, 1900.

To the Chairman, Croydon Board of Guardians.

Sir,—I, as a late nurse, have taken deep interest in the crisis at Croydon Infirmary, and would venture to give my opinion and experience.

A matron's signature should *not* be considered at all necessary for a nurse's certificate. Also the sooner the supreme power of some matrons is subjected to the higher authorities the better.

I have worked under some matrons, *two* of whom could almost be compared to angels, whereas others seem to enjoy making the lives of their subordinates miserable.

I had worked under the one for a period of two years, during which time she had never had occasion to report me to the Medical Staff, neither to the Committee, for being late or any other crime nurses are prone to. And yet when I left (resigned of my own free will—not called upon to do so), my certificate signed by the Medical Superintendent, also the Chairman—out of sheer vindictiveness the Matron had the impudence to put "general conduct fair."

Had I allowed it my people would have made a commotion at the time. But I put it down to her nasty disposition. I knew I was not a favourite of hers. I could never toady to her as some did. I destroyed the parchment. I knew I should succeed better without than with such a piece of injustice. Can anyone imagine anything so objectionable as nurses being tyrannized over to such an extent?

(The writer then gave particulars of her service including mental fever and maternity nursing, and proceeded:—)

One old lady, out of gratitude for my untiring unselfish love of my work provided for me for the rest of my life. But even now I am too fond of nursing to give it up. And yet a woman once felt too conscientious to give me the certificate I earned.

I know nothing of the three nurses whom your matron refused to sign the certificates; but if they were so uncultured, selfish and insolent, why were they allowed to remain their time, or why were they not reported? Oh! something surely requires investigating here.

I apologize for troubling you, but the words of Him who said, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you" are ever before me.

To try to right a wrong is indeed a pleasure to—

Yours faithfully, SISTER.

We make no comment upon this letter which, saturated as it is with the pauper nurse taint, speaks for itself.

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