

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



On the occasion of his visit to Ireland towards the end of this month the King will open the new Royal Victoria Hospital at Belfast. The hospital commemorates the Diamond Jubilee, and was begun five years ago. An entirely new plan has been followed in the construction, presumably for the sake of economy. The ideal "pavilion" system—such as St. Thomas's—was considered prodigal of space, and also it entails much walking upon the hospital staff. The seventeen wards of this building have therefore been built side by side, and are lit from the roof, the artificial ventilation compensating for the lack of other windows. All the wards are on one storey, and each is an independent unit for working purposes, the ward kitchens being replicas of those on White Star liners.

Personally we have a strong objection to head lights, and we must also plead a weakness for a view—a peep of green shimmering leaves and mossy lawns, or a glimpse of cloud effects, real fresh air blowing in through open windows; these are a never-failing delight to invalids. With few exceptions, we fear, these pleasures must be denied to the patients at the new hospital at Belfast.

Mr. Thomas Helligar Foord, of Acorn House, Rochester, and The Grange, Botley, Hants, has presented to the trustees of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester, a sum of £5,500 for the purpose of defraying the cost of building and furnishing a nurses' home in connection with that institution. The donor by this gift perpetuates the memory of his father and mother and his brothers and sisters. The Foord family had previously been great benefactors to the hospital.

Dr. J. F. Payne has just completed a bibliography of medicine in the Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods, a work never before performed with any degree of adequateness.

In reporting to the Royal College of Physicians the results of his investigations, which reached as far back as A.D. 597, Dr. Payne pointed out that in the earliest times the practice of curing the sick was inseparable from superstition. For example, people were assured that to partake of goose on certain days meant death within a stipulated period.

A herb called mandragora was much used, but as the "doctors" believed that to drag up the root by hand was fatal, one end of a rope was secured to a dog's neck and the other end fastened to the plant. Then food was held some distance from the hungry animal, with the result that it tugged at the rope and thus uprooted the desired herb.

The Fifty-second Annual Report of the Birkbeck Building Society shows that the business of this flourishing Society has been well maintained during

the past year, and a slight increase of profit earned over that of the previous year. A Superannuation Fund has been established for the benefit of the clerks on their retirement, and, although they will personally contribute, it was decided that it would be necessary for the Society to assist by subscribing from time to time such sums as the directors may consider necessary.

The new hospital built by the people of Exmouth at a cost of nearly £4,000, to meet the increasing demands of the district, has been formally opened by Lady Gertrude Rolle in the presence of a very large number of ladies and gentlemen.

The electric lighting of the Cardiff Infirmary, the cost of which is so generously borne by the Marquis of Bute, is to be proceeded with immediately.

An inspection of all the babies in New York is the task which has been begun by the newly-organised Infant Corps of the Department of Health.

We all deplore in the onward march of events the disappearance of historic and picturesque bits of old London, and those of us who know Paris realise how rapidly historical Paris is disappearing. Workmen are now busy on new streets to be situated on the site lately occupied by the old Trousseau Hospital. It is in the garden surrounding an adjoining chapel that that ill-fated victim of the Revolution, the Princesse de Lamballe, was buried, though the exact spot is not known. Marie Thérèse Louise de Savoie-Carignan, Princesse de Lamballe, refused to take the oath of "hatred to the King, Queen, and Royalty," and was, therefore, cruelly done to death during the terrible massacre of September, 1792. Her head was impaled on a pike and carried to the Temple, and held up before the windows of the imprisoned King Louis XVI.

All who regret the demolition of old landmarks may in this case take comfort in the thought that the children of the slums of the old St. Antoine quarter will benefit, for henceforth they will breathe the free air of heaven in what was once the garden of sleep, and raise a joyous clamour where for two centuries has reigned the silence of the dead.

The plans for a new hospital for women in the compound of St. George's Hospital, Bombay, have now been prepared by the consulting architect to the Government. The building, which is to cost something like five lakhs of rupees, will be situated in the compound in close proximity to the dilapidated structure which has been all that Bombay for many years past has been able to offer the sick womankind of that fair city in the way of hospital accommodation. According to the plans, the new building will, architecturally, be a fitting neighbour to the present block occupied by the male patients. Besides giving accommodation for sixty patients in the ordinary wards, the new structure will allow of space for some special wards. There will be a lift and many other conveniences, which will bring the new place quite up to date.

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