

## The Hospital World.

### THE SAMARITAN FREE HOSPITAL.

Was it the Royal garden party which secured for the Samaritan Free Hospital King's weather for the opening of the new out-patient department last Wednesday? Whether or no, the day was a gorgeous one, and everything looked its very best.

The hospital was founded in the year 1847, the present building in the Marylebone Road being built in 1889. At that time, however, it was impossible to build an Out-Patient Department, as the lease of the property on the site desired had not expired. Everyone, however, who has seen the new building must agree that it was well worth waiting for so desirable an acquisition.

The opening ceremony was performed in the waiting hall of the new building by the Right Hon. the Lord Leigh, President of the Hospital, the hall being crowded to its fullest capacity. Lord Portman, who had been announced to undertake this duty, was unable to be present, being otherwise occupied at Windsor; he, however, sent, as a substantial proof of his interest in the hospital, a cheque for £500, and the announcement of this welcome donation was received with hearty applause.

Prayers having been offered by the officiating chaplain, Lord Leigh said that in the absence of Lord Portman, the very pleasing duty of declaring the new Out-Patient Department open devolved upon him, and he considered it a high honour to perform it. He believed that, with Dr. Routh, he was one of the oldest friends of the Hospital. He remembered it when it was in Orchard Street, in 1847, and followed its fortunes when later it removed to Seymour Street. He had no hesitation in saying that there was not a more valuable hospital in England, and that they had as good a staff of medical officers as was to be found in the kingdom. He could not mention the medical staff without referring to the name of Sir Spencer Wells, who in its early days was the mainstay and almost the originator of the hospital.

Lord Leigh went on to speak of the great regret felt at the loss of the admirable services of Miss Butler, who had been the able Matron of the institution for twenty years. He hoped that with rest she would regain her health and strength. Speaking from his personal knowledge of the hospital he could state that the patients were always happy and contented and very appreciative of the work of the Matron for their welfare. Lord Leigh then declared the Out-patient Department open, and, after a vote of thanks had been accorded to him, those present dispersed to buy flowers at the flower stalls, or to partake of tea hospitably provided in the consulting room, or ices served in the open air, while they listened to the delightful music of Mr. Carl Heubert's Viennese Orchestra, whose services were contributed by Mr. Alfred de Rothschild.

Time was when an out-patient department was a portion of a hospital little seen by the public and if penetrated, usually proved exceedingly dreary. Now all this is changed, and such departments are being brought up to a high standard. At the Samaritan Free Hospital the new building is charming. The walls are lined with lemon-coloured tiles where they are not enamelled white, and windows and skylights are of ground glass. There is a glass operating table of complicated design, and other tables are enamelled white.

The plan of the department is that the patients enter by one door, receive their cards, and pass on to the waiting hall, from thence to the consulting room, then to the dispensary, where they obtain their medicine, and out through another door. Everything that forethought can devise seems to have been carried out for the smooth working of the department, and the Committee are to be heartily congratulated on its addition to the hospital.

In the hospital proper the wards were on view, and looked very bright and cheery. Contentment seemed to reign supreme amongst the patients, greatly due, no doubt, to the home-like atmosphere of the institution and the cheerful spirit infused into it by its Matron.

Throughout the proceedings, judging by the lovely bunches of flowers with which many of the visitors were laden, the stall-holders did a brisk business, while beguiling small children carried baskets of flowers around, and there were few present who had not at least the opportunity of becoming the possessors of lovely nosegays, while enriching the coffers of the hospital. A dainty white dog also, with a smart bow of mauve ribbon on his collar, was responsible for the addition of quite a pile of silver coins, for which he begged most zealously. After the general visitors had dispersed, Miss Butler entertained to tea past and present members of the nursing staff. It was not exactly a farewell tea party, as she will not be vacating the post until August, but as it will probably be the last occasion of the kind during her tenure of office, the nurses came in force to demonstrate their regard and affection for the Matron who has served the institution zealously and well for little short of a quarter of a century.

An influential committee has been formed in Worcester, headed by Lord Beauchamp, with the object of raising a fund to commemorate Canon the Hon. Henry Douglas's long incumbency of St. Paul's parish. It is proposed to provide permanently a trained nurse for service among the poor, in addition to placing a memorial in the parish church. Those who know how Canon and the late Lady Mary Douglas have spent themselves on behalf of the poor of the parish during a long term of years will know that a more acceptable memorial could scarcely have been devised. M. B.

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