

Annotations.

A QUEENLY GIFT.

The Queen's message to the Nation, "I appeal to all charitably disposed people in the Empire, both men and women, to assist me in alleviating the suffering of the poor and starving unemployed during this winter," will no doubt open many purse-strings, and the announcement that Her Majesty, who is ever sympathetic with the sufferings of poor, has supported her appeal by a donation of £2,000 will be a message of hope to many sad hearts. The organisation of charitable aid for the starving at the present moment is a national duty, but the constant presence in our midst of men and women willing to work, and unable to obtain employment, is one which will not be solved by sporadic philanthropic effort. The problem goes deeper than this, and demands the urgent attention of political economists. The national conscience should not be satisfied until everyone who is willing to work is able to obtain employment. On the other hand, means should be taken to ensure that those who can work and will not should be compelled to do so. The present extremes of great wealth and grinding poverty present a spectacle which is not creditable to any nation. Her Majesty's appeal to the Empire to co-operate with her in alleviating the present distress must greatly mitigate it, and give time for the consideration of the wisest measures for its permanent relief. The benefits of the Fund will extend to the whole country.

SYMBOLICAL OFFERINGS.

The proceedings at the reception of native ladies by the Princess of Wales at Bombay included, amongst other ceremonies, a symbolic offering, by Parsees, over the Princess's head of an egg and a cocoanut, both of which were subsequently broken to typify a similar fate to any evil thing threatening Her Royal Highness. Hindu goodwill was proffered by the offering of a lamp, and the red powder used for making the caste mark, while the Mahomedan ladies garlanded the Princess with flowers, scattering upon her gold and silver almond leaves, symbolising the wish that their oil might smooth her path.

Medical Matters.

LIQUID AIR IN SURGERY AND SKIN DISEASES.



Liquid air, writes Dr. Beckett in the *Australasian Medical Journal Gazette*, if applied to the skin lightly and cautiously repeated for a few minutes, will produce a refrigerating effect of any degree of intensity desired, with a resulting complete local anaesthesia, under the influence of which small surgical operations can be done. If applied too freely and for too long a time, frost-bite effects are produced, even to causing ulceration of the skin. The application is not painful unless the parts are tender and sensitive. Dr. Beckett has made use of liquid air in cases of a superficial and more or less malignant nature that have existed and have been incurable for a length of time, such as lupus, rodent ulcer, and small epitheliomas. Compared with the X-rays, the effect of liquid air is instantaneous; it acts superficially, and its use is very simple. All the apparatus required, besides the liquid air, is a suitable glass rod with a small piece of cotton-wool wound round the tip of it, the size and shape depending on the degree of intensity required to be attained. When the surface is raw or ulcerated, it is advisable to cut and to place over it a small piece of gauze; otherwise the cotton-wool will be quickly frozen to the surface.

THE THERAPEUTIC VALUE OF LUMBAR PUNCTURE IN FRACTURES OF THE SKULL.

The Paris correspondent of the *Lancet* reports that at the meeting of the Society of Surgery held on October 25th, M. Quénu gave an interesting account of seven cases of fracture of the skull which he had treated by lumbar puncture, and all of which had recovered. One of the cases showed particularly well how rapidly efficacious this therapeutic method was. The case was that of a man who had a severe fracture of the occipital bone. Lumbar puncture was performed directly he entered the hospital, and the fluid drawn off was almost pure blood. Half an hour after

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