

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



The First Lord of the Admiralty has appointed Inspector-General James Porter, C.B., M.D., to be Director-General of the Medical Department of the Royal Navy, in succession to Inspector-General Sir Herbert M. Ellis, K.C.B., K.H.P., F.R.C.S., LL.D., who has resigned.

The Lord Mayor presided at the annual public meeting of the subscribers and supporters of the Hospital Saturday Fund, held at the Mansion House last Saturday. The annual report showed that the income of the fund in 1907 was £27,140, an increase of £680 on the amount collected in 1906. The twenty-three local committees were responsible for a collection of £3,529, and £105 was received from the result of football competitions. On January 18th a sum of £24,437 was distributed among 208 institutions.—Canon Fleming moved a resolution commending the principles of self-help and mutual help as inculcated by the Hospital Saturday Fund, and said that during the thirty-four years of the Fund's existence the working men of the Metropolis had raised over £400,000 for its objects.—Mr. Joseph Diggle seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously, and a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress concluded the proceedings.

Mr. W. C. Bridgeman, M.P., Treasurer of the Hospital for Invalid Gentlewomen, London, has received an anonymous donation of £1,000 to the building fund.

The new Manchester Infirmary will cost £500,000, and four-fifths of that sum has already been paid by the Corporation for the site of the old infirmary in the centre of the city. Recently a meeting was held at the Town Hall for the purpose of raising £100,000, and subscriptions amounting to £24,500 were announced. The new infirmary will be opened this year by his Majesty the King, when it is hoped it may be free of debt.

A generous lead in response to the appeal, only issued quite recently, for additional financial support to the Nottingham General Hospital, was announced to the annual meeting of the governors held at the hospital last week. Mr. W. G. Player, of Lenton Hurst, wrote enclosing a cheque for £1,000. "That's the way to go on," said Sir Charles Seely, the Chairman, "and all the long speeches which might be made are not nearly so effective as a letter of that sort." The hospital is a noble institution, well worthy of the support of the county and the city. Sir Charles said further that no words could express the value of the work of the Matron and nurses, and that of other permanent officials. Now that the rebuilding of the General Hospital, Nottingham, is finished it is one of the most complete and beautiful hospitals in the country.

Our Foreign Letter.

A MATRON'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS.



We are in Beyrout, and on the road to Damascus. I can scarcely realise it, so long have I dreamt of doing this journey.

Our train standing in the middle of the road, masses of natives swarming around, looking for seats, seeing friends off, beggars clamouring for "baksheesh," half Beyrout seems here, and, indeed, it is a busy scene; but at last we are off, our companions being five ladies in white Syrian wraps, with their wide-rimmed hats covered with white silk mandileys (a kind of handkerchief worn by the native women). We saw them in the hotel having breakfast, and wondered who they were.

Before long we know all about them. They have come from Jerusalem, four of them being teachers in the Anglo-Jewish school, bright, jolly girls (I beg the head-mistress's pardon), the Lady-Superior among them, a clever, well-informed woman. The fifth is a sweet, little nursing sister; they are all Jewish.

Being nurses ourselves, we very soon make friends.

It is a very slow journey at first, mostly uphill, through fine gardens, mulberry groves, right away up to "Allay," with its fine houses and roads and air of well-being. On away again to "Ain Sofa," where the air was like iced champagne, so cool, delicious, and invigorating, such a height we were up (4,000 odd feet above sea level, I believe). Many passengers alighted here, wealthy folks from Egypt, there being an enormous hotel built some few years ago by a French company, where every attraction for those seeking worldly pleasures can be found, and thousands of pounds are lost nightly in the gambling saloon.

It is built on a site overlooking a fine stretch of the Lebanon, but bare and treeless near at hand. Visitors come here for the festivities provided for them in the hotel. We take a look at the great, handsome, white building, and leave it behind without a regret. Then, slowly and laboriously, the train struggles on, over the mountain track for miles and miles, until we slowly begin to descend, many times on our way seeing the old Damascus road lying away to our left, and reminding me of a tale told me by a lady who some years ago with a companion had bravely started out to do this journey on horseback, attended only by a servant, and had been stopped by Arabs among the hills, everything stolen from them, including their horses, nearly stripped of all their clothes, and left for the next traveller to assist, the terrified servant having deserted them. Remembering this, one felt there was an air of security about this slow old train, going at the rate of 8 to 10 miles an hour.

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