

MORNING SESSION, JULY 3RD.

At the Morning Session on July 3rd, Dr. Robertson, Medical Officer of Health, Birmingham, spoke of the Special Responsibilities of Sanitary Authorities with regard to Infant Welfare; Dr. Clive Riviere of London, on the Protection of Infants against Tubercular Infection; Dr. Helen Y. Campbell, Medical Officer to the City of Bradford Infant Clinic, on The Scope of the Infant Clinic, and Dr. H. W. Pooler, Hon. Physician to the Birmingham Infants' Health Society, on the Effect of Income on Nursing Capacity and Infant Growth.

REFLECTIONS

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

The suggestion that Westminster Hospital should remove to a site on Clapham Common does not appear to be without disadvantages. It is pointed out that the district is fairly well served with hospitals, and that the suburb where a general hospital is urgently needed is in the districts of Earlsfield, Tooting and Merton.

As a guest of the evening of the National Liberal Club, Lord Haldane delivered an address on "The Inwardness of the Budget." He said the present Budget was concerned largely with the rising generation. He referred to the problems of the falling birth rate and infant mortality, and said he looked forward to the creation of a Ministry of Public Health. So do we.

At a recent meeting of the Weekly Board of the Leicester Royal Infirmary it was decided that the salary of Mr. Harry Johnson, the secretary and house governor of the institution, should be at the rate of £750 per annum up to March 31st next, at which date he wishes to resign the post.

It is announced by the War Office that a Committee has been appointed to inquire into the working and organization of Voluntary Aid Detachments.

Not one trained nurse or even a woman is placed upon it!

The terms of Reference are to inquire into and report upon the difficulties which have been experienced in co-ordinating the work of the societies and associations in forming, registering, training, administering, and controlling Voluntary Aid Detachments, and to make suggestions for amending the existing schemes for the organization of voluntary aid, with a view to the removal of such difficulties.

The Committee is being furnished, by those concerned, with statements on any difficulties that may have been experienced in working the present scheme, and is proceeding forthwith to take evidence.

Let us hope some of the nurses who worked in the recent Balkan Wars will offer to give evidence.

A WORLD-FAMED INDUSTRY.

We wonder how many of the people who use the hygienic specialities which have been brought to such perfection by Messrs. Southall Bros. & Barclay give a thought to the time, labour, and expert business capacity brought to bear on their production, or to the many processes necessary before the finished articles are placed on the market.

By the courtesy of Mr. Thomas Barclay, I was recently able, with a few other interested Conference members, to visit the Charford Mills at Saltley, near Birmingham, where the company manufactures surgical dressings from the raw material, weaves cloths for bandages and gauze, and bleaches them at the mill and prepares its far-famed hygienic specialities. Over twenty-five million gallons of Birmingham water were used at Saltley for this purpose last year.

The cotton industry, as Mr. Barclay recently explained to a meeting of shareholders, is a specially interesting one, because, from its magnitude, the welfare and prosperity of the country largely depend upon it. Messrs. Southalls' mills at Saltley alone account for about a thousand tons of raw cotton a year.

The world's annual production has doubled in twenty-five years, and is about five million tons. The area planted in the United States is about thirty-eight million acres, and in addition there are the crops in Egypt, the East Indies, Brazil, China, Africa, and Peru. Planting is usually completed in May, and the picking finished in December. Although the production has doubled in twenty-five years the cost of raw cotton has not decreased, but on the contrary that has doubled too.

It is significant of the great increase in the Company's business that notwithstanding the increased cost of the raw material, its profits have not decreased. The production in 1913 was five times as much as that of 1903. Indeed, as Mr. Barclay explains, in manufacturing it seems impossible to stand still. He is particularly interested in the Saltley business because he nursed it when it was a baby. It has developed steadily in the years of childhood, but has one chronic affection, it suffers from growing pains. A spasm is expected just now.

Arrived at Mr. Barclay's office, the first things which claimed one's attention were a specimen of cotton in the pod, and some beautiful photographs, one of a cotton field, showing acres upon acres of the ripe cotton ready for picking, another which we reproduce, of a section of a cotton field in Tennessee, where the gathered cotton is being weighed. How many nurses who are constantly handling cotton as the finished product, give a thought to the patient and busy black fingers which gather the raw material under a tropical sun. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him," and it is the fashion of some who sit at home at ease to talk contemptuously of the "lazy nigger." If they did a "nigger's" work for one day they might have reason to alter their opinion.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)