

## Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



At a meeting recently held at Charing Cross Hospital, Sir Sydney H. Waterlow read a paper on "The System of Distribution of the £913,482 raised on Hospital Sunday in London, 1873-97." Sir Sydney Waterlow's wide experience in hospital management rendered him exceptionally well qualified for the task.

In the course of his remarks, Sir Sydney Waterlow explained the principle upon which the Hospital Sunday Fund was distributed. The Distribution Fund consists of the Lord Mayor, and ten members chosen annually by the Council, no gentleman who holds office in connection with any one of the hospitals applying for an award being eligible to sit upon the Committee. The work of the Distribution Committee was, he said, controlled by the constituents of the Fund who met annually at the Mansion House, as representatives of the congregations who contributed to the Hospital Sunday Fund. The awards to various institutions were based on the average total expenditure in the last three years, after certain deductions had been made, and the merits of each institution carefully considered. If the management of a hospital was considered by the Committee unsatisfactory, conference was invited between the managers and the Committee. The discussion on the paper was opened by Mr. Acland, who said that he was anxious that both the Hospital Sunday and Saturday Funds and the Prince of Wales's Fund should be distributed on one basis. If we are to understand by this that it is considered desirable that the Prince of Wales's Fund should administer the subscriptions of the three funds, the Sunday and Saturday Funds would cease to exist, and as it has been amply demonstrated this year, that subscriptions formerly given to institutions whose management gained public confidence, have been sent direct to the Prince of Wales's Fund—no doubt out of respect to the Queen—we would warn hospital committees that if there is to be one central body for distributing all subscriptions of the charitable, they must be content to administer their institutions upon the directions of the Committee of the Central Fund. The common danger of such centralization does not require a moment's consideration. Individual excellence in hospital management would cease to exist, and moreover the sick poor would be absolutely defenceless in their relations with public hospitals—in our opinion a very undesirable condition of affairs.

The delegates of the Hospital Saturday Fund, who met on Saturday, at 54, Gray's Inn Road, Mr. R. B. Acland in the chair, were chiefly engaged in considering an important communication from the Chief Commissioner of Police with regard to street collections. Sir Edward Bradford has received numerous complaints from people who have been worried for contributions to the Hospital Saturday Fund by over-zealous collectors brandishing money-boxes. The Chief Commissioner, therefore, wrote urging the committee to take steps to prevent these importunities; "for, whilst no one complains," wrote Sir Edward, "of a collector sitting at a

street corner to receive money voluntarily given, it becomes a question whether it will be necessary for the police to remove, and treat as ordinary cases of begging, the importunate collectors who behave in such a manner as to cause complaints to be made to the police." The result of the letter was that a special committee was appointed to consider whether it is desirable to continue the street collections, and, if so, how to prevent unnecessary annoyance. The fact that this year's street collections were less than those of the previous year by over £1000 was not unnaturally regarded by some of those present as a significant commentary to the Chief Commissioner's letter.

The Local Government Board have written to the managers of the Brook Hospital, who have applied for permission to spend another £100,000 upon its erection, a letter stating that before authorizing a further expenditure they wish for an explanation as to the great excess of money already spent beyond the original contract. The Board suggests that the accounts should be placed in the hands of a competent surveyor, for examination item by item.

The Philanthropic Reform Association, which has its headquarters in Dublin, and which was founded in 1896, has published its first annual report. It presses home the fact that the duty of public reform lies with citizens, and that the blame for the defects in law and administration which are pointed out must lie, not upon those who have been working zealously as guardians of the poor, and managers of reformatory and industrial schools, but upon the citizens, whose contented ignorance of these matters leaves the few who understand what is requisite, whether official experts or others, without the support of earnest public opinion. For instance, it is now generally agreed that pauper lunatics are not properly cared for, but a thoroughly effective bill will not be carried unless the public show more interest in the matter.

The Committee of the Association, in taking this line, have undoubtedly struck the right note, and we hope that they will be able widely to imbue citizens with the feeling of the responsibilities which devolve upon them in the performance of their public duties.

At the recent Annual Meeting of the Governors of the Lowestoft Hospital a most satisfactory report was read, the statement of accounts showing that the income had been sufficient to meet the expenditure of the year, while a gift of £100 from Mrs. Arnold had been invested. The gift of the new wing for children by Alderman Youngman, J.P., who built and furnished this last addition to the Hospital, was gratefully commented upon, and it was resolved to make an appeal to the public for funds to endow the wing.

Dr. Frederick St. George Mivart has been appointed by Mr. Chaplin as a medical inspector of the Local Government Board, in place of the late Dr. F. W. Barry. Dr. Mivart became a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, in 1881, and a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, England, in the same year. Three years later he was admitted a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. He has been practising his profession at Wimbledon.

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