

Administration at Addenbrooke's.**COUNSEL'S ADVICE TO BE TAKEN.**

NOT since the historic meeting held in Cambridge last year, to decide whether or no women who had earned them should be admitted to University degrees, has Cambridge been so deeply moved on matters of public interest, as it is at present over the question of the radical changes proposed in the government of Addenbrooke's Hospital by Sir Henry Burdett. For some reason the Committee of that institution have called in Sir Henry Burdett to give an expert opinion in matters of hospital administration, and have paid him a handsome fee for his advice. Upon what justification Sir Henry Burdett charges, and the Committee pays, such a fee out of public funds for advice as an expert in hospital management we fail to understand. Sir Henry Burdett is neither a registered medical practitioner, a certificated trained nurse, a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, nor of the Society of Engineers, neither have we ever heard that he is a chartered accountant, and the official position held by him in the Hospital World, so far as we know, has been merely that of paid secretary to two unimportant institutions. We are not therefore surprised that his suggestions and recommendations have met with an outburst of disapprobation, and just indignation, upon the part of the more intelligent governors of Addenbrooke's Hospital.

As we reported last week Sir Henry Burdett's first resolution, recommending the annual appointment of a Committee of Management, together with the Chairman, whose duties should include those at present assigned to the weekly board, the select governors, and the finance committee, was negatived at the first meeting. A poll was, however, demanded, and last week the vote was reversed by a majority of 50, with the result that a meeting was called on Monday last to take into consideration the remaining resolutions, at which Mr. Hamilton Smith was voted to the chair, and a large number of governors were present, and at which the proceedings were eminently instructive.

It would appear that Addenbrooke's Hospital is governed by an Act of Parliament, and after many diverse expressions of opinion, the meeting was ultimately adjourned in order to take counsel's opinion as to whether or no the recommendations proposed by Sir Henry Burdett were *ultra vires*.—Dr. Latham, Dr. Warraker, and the Rev. G. B. Finch, being strongly of opinion that the new constitution proposed was illegal. Sir Henry Burdett, who was present, said that as he was responsible for the principles underlying the recommendations, he had not ventured to make these recommendations without taking the opinion of one who had had much to do with this kind of work. He had consulted Mr. Briscoe, and all the recommendations were in his opinion within the constitution. Dr. Warraker asked Sir Henry Burdett if he had Mr. Briscoe's opinion with him, and receiving an answer in the negative, asked Sir Henry if he had a copy of the case upon which Mr. Briscoe based his opinion, when again receiving an answer in the negative Dr. Warraker remarked that they only had Sir Henry Burdett's statement that some sort of case was submitted to Mr. Briscoe, which aroused somewhat of a hubbub, compelling Dr. Warraker to ask the Chairman for protection from "these extremely unseemly interruptions." (Hear, hear).

Much influence was brought to bear from the chair and by Sir Henry Burdett's supporters to consider the

remaining recommendations, but as it was rightly argued, that if the first recommendation considered and approved at a previous meeting was *ultra vires*, it was waste of time to consider the rest, the motion for adjournment proposed by the Rev. G. B. Finch, and seconded by Dr. Latham, was carried, 19 voting for, and 17 against it.

The most important step now for the Governors of Addenbrooke's Hospital, is the choice of an honest counsel.

Our experience, as a member of the Royal British Nurses' Association as to the value of counsel's opinion is that the majority of Q.C.'s can, if they find it expedient, drive a coach and four through any legal document, Royal Charter, or Act of Parliament, which has been compiled by the greatest luminaries in the law.

The Proposed Central Hospital Board.

At a special meeting of the Council of the Charity Organization Society, held at the United Service Institution, Whitehall, and presided over by Sir Joshua Fitch, on Monday last, a most able and exhaustive paper, the outcome evidently of much laborious work, was read by Lieut. Colonel Montefiore, late R.A., entitled "A Survey of Metropolitan Medical Relief."

Colonel Montefiore, whose experience as a member of the Committee of a Metropolitan Hospital, and in connection with the Charity Organization Society makes his opinion a valuable one, dealt first with the three funds devoted to the improvement of the financial condition of Metropolitan Medical Charities namely the Prince of Wales' Hospital Fund, the "Sunday" Fund, and the "Saturday" Fund. With regard to the Prince of Wales' Fund, the lecturer mentioned that investigations had been made by visitors appointed by the Fund into a large number of institutions, but that "it is believed that no publicity is to be given to the reports of these visitors, and therefore the Managing Committee of any charity will not have the opportunity of explaining in public any details that may induce the Council of the Fund to give it either no grant, or a very small one; neither, on the other hand, will the public be made aware why a specially large sum has been given to any particular institution."

With regard to the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund, "much was expected of it," but, unfortunately, it has not fulfilled its promise. The Saturday Fund, notwithstanding good work done, tends, in Colonel Montefiore's opinion, to foster the "letter system" and to make the artizan and his family, when suffering from ordinary and trivial complaints, rely on the out-patient department of the hospital for their treatment, rather than on the local medical practitioner who may be attached to his club, or to his provident dispensary.

Colonel Montefiore, and the Council of the Charity Organization Society are of opinion that a Central Hospital Board is needed to facilitate the introduction of system into the "chaotic mass of institutions," truly representative of all the interests involved. With this suggestion we are in entire sympathy, and after the meeting we gathered with much pleasure from Colonel Montefiore, that he realizes that one of the interests involved is that of nursing, and that he is ready to recognise the principle of the representation of nursing interests upon the proposed Central Hospital Board.

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