

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



The new stamps which are to be issued on New Year's Day next, will show no alteration in the head of the Queen. As regards colour, the half-penny stamp is to be green, the penny stamp red, and the twopence-halfpenny blue. The shilling stamp will probably remain as at present.

The P. and O. Company's steamer *Peninsular*, Captain Wheler, arrived at Plymouth last Saturday from Bombay, with one of the native crew suffering from bubonic plague. The disease developed on the 9th October, the day before the vessel called at Gibraltar. The patient, a coal trimmer, was immediately isolated, and steps were taken to prevent any spread of the plague. At first the patient became worse, but ultimately his condition improved to the extent that on arrival at Plymouth it was found possible to transfer him to the port sanitary authority's hospital ship, *Pique*, in Plymouth Sound, where his attendant was also conveyed. At Plymouth a number of the *Peninsular's* passengers were allowed to land, after being inspected by Dr. F. M. Williams, the port sanitary officer, who took all their addresses, in compliance with the regulations of the Local Government Board.

At the Conference held last week at St. Martin's Town Hall, under the auspices of the Hospital Reform Association, "the inquiry system," "payments by patients," and "provident dispensaries" were subjects considered. During the discussion on "payments by patients," there was a passage at arms between the Hon. Secretary (Dr. T. Garrett Horder) and Mr. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the London Hospital. Dr. Horder objected to Mr. Holland's assertion that the Hospital Reform Association was "got up by a lot of gentlemen living in Wales," and demanded a withdrawal of the statement. Mr. Holland however stood his ground and refused to withdraw.

A course of eight lectures by Miss Margaret Sewell, warden of the Women's University Settlement, Southwark, on "Forethought in Charitable Work," has been arranged by the joint committee of the Women's University Settlement, the National Union of Women Workers, and the Charity Organisation Society, to take place at the Westminster Town Hall on consecutive Fridays, at 11.30 a.m., beginning October 20th. All particulars about these and other lectures arranged by the joint committee, may be obtained from Mrs. G. F. Hill, 19, Park Mansions, Battersea Park, S.W.

At a meeting of the Governors of the University College, Liverpool, recently, the Earl of Derby presiding, it was announced that Mrs. George Holt and her daughter Miss Emma Holt, had each sent cheques for £5,000 to be devoted to the purposes of the physical laboratory. These ladies had already subscribed £2,000, to the Medical School and £3,000 to the Anatomical School.

Professional Review:

PRACTICAL NURSING.

NURSING AS A PROFESSION.

We have received a copy of the first volume of this book, by Miss Isla Stewart, Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and Chairman of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, and Dr. Herbert E. Cuff, F.R.C.S., Medical Superintendent of the North-Eastern Fever Hospital, Tottenham, published by William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, price 3s. 6d. net. The authors state in the preface that their object in writing the book has been to make the practical part as thorough as possible. They do not for one moment believe that book-work can ever take the place of, or compete with ward-work, but they hold that nurses should understand the reasons for carrying out the treatment ordered, so that they may take an interest in their work, and consequently may perform it with increasing intelligence.

The first chapter deals with Nursing as a Profession, and it is pointed out that it is only of late years that systematic training for nurses has been considered necessary, and that even now the constitution of that training, its method, length, and the minimum standard of efficiency are matters of dispute rather than of agreement. At the same time it is stated that the fact that many of the public as well as the more thoughtful among nurses feel the necessity for organization is an advance in the right direction. Attention is also drawn to the fact that the improvement in nurse training was not initiated by members of the medical profession, strange as it is that they did not earlier recognize the sufferings undergone by their patients at the hands of incompetent and worthless women, but that the change for the better in the efficiency and morality of women who adopted the vocation of nursing dates mainly from the time when Miss Nightingale founded the Nightingale Training School for Nurses in connection with St. Thomas's Hospital. The authors then proceed to point out that, although curiously enough the medical profession seem to fear over-training, as tending to produce a lower order of practitioner, yet, it is undoubtedly the insufficiently trained and disciplined who fail to recognize the grave responsibility of disobedience to medical directions, and they therefore advocate the requirement of a minimum standard of knowledge, the passing of a definite period in hospitals large enough to ensure that the knowledge obtained should be sufficiently varied, and the adoption of some method of testing this knowledge by examination. They are of opinion that the adoption of such a scheme would tend to sweep out of a grand profession the women who now bring disgrace on its ranks. The next point touched upon is one of considerable importance, namely, the selection of candidates as probationers. We read, "An increasing number of hospital authorities are beginning to feel the necessity for some little preparation in the way of special study, both practical and theoretical, leading up to an examination, by which the candidate's intelligence is tested, while at the same time her physical fitness is proved. It certainly seems desirable that probationers should begin their work in wards with some knowledge of

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