

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



Sir Saville Crossley has been unanimously elected chairman of the Hospital Saturday Fund, and will preside at the next meeting of the Board on the first Saturday in April.

The Metropolitan, in the Kingsland Road, is a very much needed and useful institution and we are glad to learn that its position is improving. The Lord Mayor presided over the recent festival dinner which was held at the Hôtel Métropole, when among those present were Lord Battersea (treasurer), Sir J. Fortescue Flannery, M.P., Mr. E. Flower, M.P., Mr. C. J. Thomas (chairman), and Lieut-Colonel Montefiore. In giving the toast of the hospital, his lordship urged that the military spirit that dominated the country should not be allowed to overshadow the claims of the great charities that ministered to the sick and suffering at home. During the past year 867 in-patients and 101,597 out-patients had been treated at the Metropolitan Hospital, but owing to lack of funds the committee had only been able to open seventy-two of the 160 beds which it contained. Lord Battersea replied that the institution was in a better position even in this year of great subscriptions than it had ever been in the past. In response to the chairman's appeal, Mr. C. H. Byers, the secretary, was able to announce a subscription list amounting to £4,358, beating the previous best on record by over a thousand pounds.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has done wisely to promise that the Lambeth Palace grounds shall be thrown open to the public. South of the river, so far away from the lovely West End parks, and in the densely populated district surrounding Lambeth, more space for the recreation of the poor people who toil day and night is urgently needed. The London County Council is to be congratulated upon having moved in this matter.

Attention has been called to the great number of deaths which have taken place at Leavesden Asylum since the beginning of the year—94 in six weeks—49 of which were due to one epidemic of influenza. What is the system of nursing at this institution? We should advise the Metropolitan Asylums Board, which controls this Asylum, to inquire into the matter. From all reports it is urgently necessary that they should do so.

At a recent meeting of the Tynemouth Guardians a member of the Board inquired why mention had not been made in the report that the medical officer had excluded lady Guardians from visiting the maternity wards at the workhouse. It appears that these wards have been closed against them for six months. While recognising that, upon occasions, the medical officer is wise to exclude all persons except the medical and nursing staff, we cannot think it right that the lady Guardians should be permanently excluded. They are responsible for the well-being of the patients in these

as well as in the other wards, and have a right to inspect them. No doubt, as one of the lady Guardians remarked, they, as sensible women, know exactly when to visit and when to refrain from doing so.

At the Annual Meeting of the Stockport Infirmary, the Secretary reported that the New Diamond Jubilee Wing had made but slow progress during the year, owing to the disputes in the building trade, but it was now progressing satisfactorily. The steam Laundry was completed last September and was now in full working order. Over £2,000 is still required to defray the cost of the new wing. The Committee records that the work of the Nursing Staff, which consists of two Sisters, three Nurses, and nine Probationers, under the able superintendence of the Matron, continues in every way to be satisfactory.

The Anglo-American Nursing Home is now a *fait accompli* in Rome. The scheme met with opposition in certain quarters, but all difficulties have been successfully overcome. A villino, excellently adapted for the purpose, was found in the Via Nomentana, a little way outside the Porta Pia. The building is charmingly situated, and has 27 rooms, and can conveniently accommodate six or eight patients, who have the use of several comfortable day-rooms. The walls and ceilings are artistically painted, and all the rooms have a cheerful outlook. On the roof is a terrace commanding an extensive view of the Campagna, with the whole range of the Alban and Sabine Hills in the distance. The situation and arrangement of the home make it well suited for the open-air treatment of tuberculous cases. Ordinary patients pay an inclusive charge of 20 francs a day, but two beds are set apart for patients who cannot afford more than half the usual rate, and two are entirely free.

Sir Charles Bruce, Governor of Mauritius, in a telegram to Mr. Chamberlain reports that for the week ending February 22nd there were eight fresh cases of plague and four deaths from disease in the island. A telegram from Sydney states that a sailmaker there has fallen a victim to the plague. He lived on his business premises, where he was attacked, and he then removed to a suburban residence. It is believed that the infection is traceable to a dead rat, for there is an epidemic among the rats at the Sydney wharves at present. A telegram from Alexandria states that quarantine has been declared on vessels coming from Aden.

Lord G. Hamilton stated last week in the House that the deaths in Bombay City from plague during the week ending February 16th were 583; the number for the corresponding week of last year being 712. As regards the famine, the latest estimate of the area affected is now calculated to be 445,000 square miles, and the population affected 61,500,000, as against 551,000 square miles and 49,000,000 population, which were the figures given by him in answer to a question on February 1st. The number of persons in receipt of relief is now about 4,000,000, as against 3,000,000 in the corresponding week of 1897. On the other hand, the relief arrangements are more advanced than they were in that year. The people are more willing to accept relief, prices are on the whole less high, and the death-rates in the famine districts, so far as yet known, are lower.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)