

## Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



Princess Henry of Battenberg has consented to lay the foundation-stone of the new Belgrave Hospital for Children, which is to be built at the junction of the Brixton and Clapham Roads at Kennington. The ceremony will take place at the end of June.

At the fortnightly meeting of the Metropolitan Asylums Board a letter was read from the Local Government Board, dated April 10th, promising to issue an order authorising the managers to expend the sum of £257,100 on the erection of the Joyce Green Hospital, and to obtain the amount by a loan repayable as to £246,000 in 30 years, and as to £11,100 in 15 years.

The Earl of Derby, at Colne, opened a much-needed cottage hospital. Mr. W. Pickles Hartley, of Aintree, subscribed £5,000 towards the cost, the balance being found by the townspeople.

Major William Babbie, C.M.G., Royal Army Medical Corps, has been awarded the Victoria Cross for his conspicuous bravery at the battle of Colenso. He rode to a donga in which the wounded of the 14th and 66th Batteries Royal Artillery were lying, and attended them under a heavy fire. Later in the day he went out and brought in Lieutenant Roberts, who was lying wounded on the veldt.

Up to the end of March next, Great Britain expects to spend on the war, roughly, the sum of £114,000,000. A writer in the *Home Magazine* has been making a calculation as to what could be done with that amount in philanthropic, educational, and religious effort:—It would (he says) maintain every aged poor person in the United Kingdom, educate all our millions of children, support all our paupers, replace every pound spent throughout the Kingdom on every form of missionary and charitable work, endow all our hospitals, support every church and chapel with their tens of thousands of ministers, maintain thousands of convalescent homes, libraries and museums, equip and support thousands of technical schools, pay for an army of 50,000 missionaries, supply coals, blankets, and medical comforts to millions, and still leave millions more to spend on similar works of usefulness.

Sir John Batty Tuke, M.D., has been unanimously chosen as the Unionist candidate for the Parliamentary representation of Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities, in succession to the late Sir William Priestley, and it is expected that he will be returned unopposed. Sir John is one of the most prominent medical men in the Scottish capital. He was born at Beverley, Yorkshire, in 1835, but received his education in the northern capital. In 1856 he took his degree in medicine, and became Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, in 1871, subsequently occupying the post of President for three terms. He has principally devoted himself to the study of mental diseases, and was knighted in 1898.

The pier at Netley Hospital having recently been reported insecure, it became necessary to renew some of the planking. The following notice was composed by a member of the Medical Staff Corps, and duly posted up: "Patients are not allowed on this pier while undergoing repairs."

Recent explorers in both the Arctic and Antarctic regions, says *Health*, have brought back interesting information concerning bacterial life in the frigid zones. It has long been known that travellers in the Arctic territory suffer very little from excessive changes of temperature, and are entirely free from colds and coughs, which are so frequently observed in the winter in our own latitude. Nordenskiöld is authority for the statement that Spitzbergen in the summer time is the healthiest portion of the earth. Levin made a number of cultures of the air in Spitzbergen and in King Charlesland. Samples of air were taken on the surface of the glacier, on the coast, on the top of a cliff, as well as on board ship. In each instance about 50 gallons of air were filtered, indicating an elapsed time during the experiment of four or five hours. In only one instance were bacilli found. In that case the air was taken from the deck of the vessel while it was in harbour, and as only three colonies of bacteria developed, it is possible that a grain of dust from the ship got into the gelatine. On the other hand, all samples of water, whether taken from the surface of the sea or at a great depth, or from a glacier or obtained by melting snow or ice, were found to contain bacteria, although in very small numbers. At the surface of the sea Levin found one germ for each 11 c.c. (3 drachms) of water—a quantity of germ-life which is absolutely insignificant. The same amount of water taken from the River Seine has been found to contain more than two million bacteria. A curious fact was noticed in that the water taken from the ocean at great depth invariably contained more bacteria than water from the surface, and this in spite of the fact that deep water in the Arctic Ocean is usually below the freezing point.

It is stated that cases of plague are reported from several ports in the Red Sea.

The Indian Famine Fund is still under £200,000, whilst official reports confirm the accounts of the terrible nature of the suffering, especially in Bombay and Rajputana.

One district has lost a million cattle out of 1,300,000, and a number of people are dying of starvation.

Children are found wandering homeless, ill-clad, and emaciated, and cases have been reported of their having been sold for money.

The business men in Berlin have contributed a sum of £20,000.

A Bill prohibiting the use of tobacco by all persons under 18 years of age, and by all minor pupils in public schools, is now before the Iowa State Legislature.

According to the *New York Sun*, Brooklyn has been afflicted of late with an epidemic of suppurative otitis involving the mastoid cells, following, and probably dependent upon, a mild epidemic of German measles.

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