

### Annotations.

#### HOSPITALS AND THE RATES.

THE Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider the operation of the law by which hospitals and other similar institutions are liable to local rates, has now been issued as a Blue Book. The Committee recommend that the principle of exemption from rates should be applied to hospitals, infirmaries, and other institutions for the care and treatment of sick, injured, or mentally afflicted persons, which are not carried on for profit or gain, which are supported wholly or in part by voluntary contributions or endowments, and which directly benefit the rates in the county or district in which they are located to a greater extent than they pay rates. They also recommend that any Bill introduced to give effect to this principle should confer power on the rating authorities to deal with the question, and in the event of the rating authority not acting that the institutions concerned should have a right of appeal to the county council or whatever body is the central rating authority. This central authority should also be empowered to arrange for the distribution of the loss inflicted by exemption in any one rating area over those areas which are directly benefitted by the hospital or other institution concerned, or they should be allowed to make good the loss out of the county fund.

#### THE PLAGUE AT GLASGOW.

Cases of suspected plague are still occurring in Glasgow, and the vigilance of the medical and sanitary authorities is still unrelaxed. Dr. Chalmers and his medical and sanitary assistants have been inoculated, thus giving proof of their belief in the efficacy of this treatment. The doctors and nurses at Belvidere Hospital who have been deputed to treat and nurse the plague patients have also undergone inoculation. Another precautionary measure is the employment of a rat-catcher in the infected area.

Meanwhile, should the plague come to London, it is most important that medical men should know what to do with a case if they meet with one. It is not reassuring to be told by the *British Medical Journal* that "the usual medium—the Metropolitan Asylums Board in London—is not available or equipped for such an emergency," and that it knows of "no other organization by which cases of plague and those who have been in contact with them can be instantly dealt with." Without doubt

there are grave objections to cases of plague being sent to the ordinary infectious hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, but at the same time the Board has experience in dealing with infectious diseases possessed by no other body, and it is probable that cases of plague could be best dealt with by it. The combined action of the Local Government Board, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board should be effective, and the Local Government Board have sent circulars of instructions and suggestions to every medical officer in the country.

#### RUSSIAN RED CROSS WORK.

The Russian Red Cross Society, which is under the immediate direction of the Grand Duchess Eugénie of Oldenburg, has decided to send three representatives to the Far East, namely, Madame Orjefsky, widow of the late Governor-General of Wilna; M. Alexandrofsky, a gentleman of the Chamber; and Dr. Reyeff, and a staff of doctors, assistants, and sisters of mercy. M. Alexandrofsky will organize medical assistance and flying detachments and provision depôts. Madame Orjefsky will organize a special hospital train and two ambulance barges for the transport of the sick and wounded, while Dr. Reyeff will reinforce the staff at the military hospital at Khailar. The Society is also sending out twelve hospitals of twenty-five beds, capable of being increased to fifty, with a staff of medical men; and six Sisters of Charity are to be sent to each military field hospital and twelve to each fortress hospital. If Russia can send women to nurse in field hospitals in a country like China, surely British nurses may be employed in them in a war with a civilised power.

#### BRITISH GRIT.

When the relieving column entered Ladysmith in hot haste, travelled-stained, and toil-worn, it was met by Sir George White and his staff, dressed with as much care as for an ordinary field day, and now news comes from Peking that when the city was entered by haggard soldiers, with ragged beards, their uniforms stained and encrusted with mud, they were received by Sir Claude Macdonald, clean shaven and arrayed in immaculate tennis flannels, while the ladies were wearing fresh and bright summer gowns. A second glance showed that the defenders of the Legation—whose valour is worthy to rank with that of the defenders of Lucknow Residency—were pathetically pale and thin.

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