

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



Mr. W. H. Cross, Clerk to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, whose connection with the institution extends over thirty-five years, and who has reached a limit of years, when under other circumstances his resignation might have been considered, has been asked to continue in office until the process of extending the Hospital buildings has been satisfactorily concluded. The Hospital could ill spare Mr. Cross at this juncture.

The Local Government Board has formally sanctioned the erection of a new hospital in South London at a cost of £284,000.

The Royal Free Hospital, London, and the Royal National Hospital for Consumption, Ventnor, have each received a donation of £1,000 from Mr. Peregrine Purvis.

The first Egyptian Medical Congress is to be held at Cairo in December, 1902.

Sir Joseph Palley, the former M.P. for Hereford, who died August 25th, bequeathed £1,000 to the Herefordshire General Hospital, £500 to the Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Hereford, £250 to the Hereford Public Dispensary, £500 to the Herefordshire Working Boys' Home Industrial School, £2,000 to the Bishop of Hereford, for assistance of Diocesan institutions and poor clergy, £1,000 to the Hereford Public Library, to build a room named after Gladstone.

Major Ronald Ross, F.R.S., writing from the Gold Coast, says:—"The unhealthiness of the coast has been much exaggerated. True there is a considerable amount of malaria among Europeans, but then there is little or no typhoid. Everywhere we meet men who have lived for years on the coast in a good state of health. I entirely agree with those who maintain that it is the young, feckless, improvident, and sometimes intemperate new-comer who generally falls a victim to disease. The sober, sensible man can usually rely on escaping. I can now permit myself to say with confidence that in nine cases out of ten if a man contracts malarial infection it is his own fault. The scrupulous use of a mosquito net, attention to domestic cleanliness, exercise, temperance, and an occasional strong dose of quinine are the things principally required. If men despise every dictate of science as well as of commonsense, what can they expect?"

It would be interesting to know if Major Ross modifies this opinion after an attack of malarial fever. Under the new conditions resulting from the extirpation of the mosquito his estimate may be correct, but most residents in malarious regions can point to many instances in which all known precautions have been rigorously observed, but in which the individuals concerned have nevertheless been not exempt from severe attacks of malaria.

Professional Review.**BACTERIOLOGY AND SURGICAL TECHNIQUE FOR NURSES.**

We have received from the publishers, Messrs. W. B. Saunders & Co., 161, Strand, W.C., a copy of *Bacteriology and Surgical Technique for Nurses*, by Miss Emily M. A. Stoney, Superintendent of the Training School for Nurses, St. Anthony's Hospital, Rock Island, Illinois, U.S.A.

We commend the book most heartily to nurses who wish to acquaint themselves with modern methods of surgical technique, and with the history of bacteriology. The nurse who has left her training school for some time, however good her practical work may be, is apt to find herself ignorant of details which constitute the A-B-C of work to the hospital nurse of to-day. Pending the Nursing College which will afford opportunities to graduate nurses to obtain practical instruction in modern methods, and to keep themselves conversant with modern nursing progress, we must fall back upon books to supply the necessary knowledge, and the one under discussion is an admirable handbook on the subjects which it treats.

BACTERIOLOGY.

Part I. is devoted to Bacteriology, the history of which, as detailed by Miss Stoney, is most interesting. It is now over two hundred years ago since Anthony van Leeuwenhoek, a native of Delft in Holland, produced the first really good microscope that had been constructed. He saw and described with astonishing clearness various forms of bacteria found in the material taken from the teeth of an old man who never cleaned his teeth.

He gave an accurate description of the rod-shaped bacteria, mobile and motionless; of the longer threads, now called bacilli; of the spiral threads, or spirilla; and of rounded micro-organisms, or micrococci.

Although he did not attempt to theorize as to the meaning of these organisms in the mouth at the time, later on, in 1713, after finding similar organisms in the greenish pellicle formed on the surface of water in an aquarium, he came to the conclusion that the various forms of bacteria found in the material scraped from the teeth found their way into the mouth through the medium of the drinking water that had been stored in barrels, and that some of these found there a nidus in which they multiplied.

This was the beginning of bacteriology, but it was not until 1831 that any important advance in knowledge with regard to it was made, or any systematic attempt to classify newly observed facts.

The first person who made an attempt to arrange the accumulated knowledge of years was Frederic Muller, of Copenhagen, who, in the course of this work, became acquainted with the presence of a "contagium vivum" or living contagious element in the production of disease and fermentations. From that day to this the science of bacteriology has grown rapidly, and has revolutionized many branches of medicine.

Some of the principal names connected with discoveries in this direction are Henle, Pasteur, Koch and Davaine. It was Davaine who, in 1848, was the first to see and recognize disease-producing bacteria,

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