

## The Hospital World.

### RUNNING A BIG LONDON HOSPITAL.

#### *Description of a Hospital "Star."*

Mr. Sydney Holland, the Chairman of the London Hospital, has quite recently told all the world of the many miles of plaster and the millions of pills and of the prodigious vista of eggs necessary to the upkeep of the great institution over which he so manfully presides. No doubt to many men in the street these figures brought home for the first time the vastness of the work that is done within the walls of each of our up-to-date London hospitals—note the adjective!

The governors of a London hospital may number thousands; the more the merrier. A governor is an annual subscriber or a generous donor; a regular subscription of one guinea a year will qualify a person as a life-governor, so will one lump sum of ten guineas. The Committee of Management is elected from the army of governors. The members of the committee are elected at what is ordinarily called the Annual Court of Governors, which is usually held in the early part of the year.

The committee may total anything up to thirty members. On some committees ladies figure as active members; of late there has been a growing tendency in this direction, as it has been wisely realised that there are certain questions affecting hospital management which ladies are better qualified to deal with than men. Where ladies are not actually on the committee there is probably a ladies' committee which has the power and opportunity of putting before the managers its views on certain matters. From the Committee of Management are again elected the House Committee, the Weekly Board, the Finance Committee, and so on. These bodies meet weekly, or, say, fortnightly, and they duly report conduct and progress to the committee proper, which meets at least once a quarter.

You will find, on reading through the official annual report of any well-conducted hospital, that the name of the same gentleman crops up on several committees. For instance, I know a hospital where the treasurer of the institution, the chairman of the weekly board, and the most energetic member of the whole committee is one and the same individual. Every hospital has its "star" governor, and badly off without him would some of the charities be. He must be a man with brains and a man of tireless energy, or he's no hospital "star." He is one who can go to the City and effectually whip up his influential and wealthy friends; one who can go into society and secure attention and sympathy; one who is not above chatting with an individual nurse, or porter, or other minor official of the hospital, and ascertaining the rights and wrongs of a question from more than one standpoint. He will occasion-

ally take part in an unexciting fire-drill in order to let others see how important he considers that branch of public institution education to be; he examines raw meat and poultry now and then when he is passing the larder, and he peeps into dark corners of the basement to see that no dead cats are lying about polluting the atmosphere.

"A many-sided man," you say, and I cordially agree, while adding "Good luck to him!" He does it all for nothing, bear in mind. The hospital "star" proper has no axe to grind. His name isn't known to 99 per cent. of the poor sick folk who benefit so largely by his splendid work. He toils for the love of suffering humanity; so hard he labours sometimes, going out when everybody but bus-drivers and policemen remain indoors, that his own health is affected. His energy is so fierce that other industrious men seem to be doing nothing. He is to his pet hospital what Mr. Quinton Hogg was to the Polytechnic.

Of course, this "star" is backed up by the Secretary of the hospital, who ought to be an elegant fellow who is able to write a diplomatic letter, tot up a column of ill-formed figures, interview scores of callers and maintain amiability all at one and the same time. Also the House Steward must do his share of pushing behind the "star"; he ought to be a not over-ornamental chap, full of vigour and vim, who will rise cheerfully for any possible emergency at any hour of the night and appear intelligent and good-tempered the whole of the following day, just as if he had had his solid nine hours' rest. Then also the Matron must be a willing and clever assistant of the "star"; she ought to be a gracious lady, patient enough with the junior nurses and firm enough with the senior nurses and Sisters, and capable of talking a duck off the water when she conducts round the wards a mon-eyed visitor who may have an odd "thou" or two to give away. With the help of these permanent officials, and the sympathy and active co-operation of his colleagues on the committee, the hospital "star" can do wonders.

Of the medical men of London the man in the street is absolutely trustful. They are a body of unsurpassed excellence, who nobly give their days and strength to their fellow creatures in a manner that is beyond all praise. The successful London doctor who only works eight hours a day is unknown to me. He may exist, but I haven't heard of him. Double the hours named above and you will be much nearer to the duration of his working day. He is a wonderful enthusiast, whose work is bound to tell. Without him even the hospital "star" would spend his time in vain.

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To some eyes the London hospitals may seem dark and dreary places. Possibly the windows are not very clean and no flower-boxes adorn the

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