

## Annotations.

### THE QUEEN'S HOPE.

The Queen, who, during the recent Royal visit to Ireland, gave ample proof of her tender solicitude for the sick, has sent to the Countess of Dudley a donation of £50 for her Excellency's Fund for providing trained nursing for the sick poor of Ireland. Her Majesty, in forwarding the donation, expressed her pleasure at receiving the three first nurses appointed for work in the West of Ireland in connection with the Fund, and Mr. Sidney Greville, who by the Queen's command forwarded the gift to Lady Dudley, concluded his letter by saying: "Her Majesty was much interested in hearing how well the work is progressing, and by sending a small donation towards your Fund the Queen hopes that it may encourage others to assist in so excellent a scheme." We trust that the Queen's hope will be fulfilled, and that her example will loosen many purse-strings, so that help may pour in in so good a cause. Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Connaught has presented the beds for the use of the nurses who are starting work in the West.

### THE CANCER RESEARCH FUND.

Mr. Balfour last week took the chair at a meeting of the General Committee of the Cancer Research Fund held in the Examination Hall on the Victoria Embankment. The Fund, of which the King is Patron and the Prince of Wales President, was started a year ago to carry out a general investigation as to the cause of cancer, and, to raise money to carry on research. It is in communication with Government departments and with authorities all over the world, and is receiving from them valuable assistance.

Lord Strathcona, in moving the adoption of the report, appealed for increased financial aid, as the revenue was insufficient to meet the expenditure. The amount already subscribed was £50,000. It was essential that the Fund should be raised to £100,000. The Prime Minister, who stated that he was there as a substitute for the Prince of Wales, whose unavoidable absence they all deplored, said that he derived comfort and consolation from the breadth and sweep of the inquiry which had been undertaken by the Association. Isolated endeavours had been going on for years past in every hospital and by every medical practitioner in every civilised country

in the world. What was wanted was co-operation between all the different workers who were engaged in combatting the ravages of the disease and all those who, by general and biological attainments, could throw light on a subject which was still wrapped in absolute darkness—namely, the cause and origin of the disease itself, and the action of its special distribution among age, sex, and locality.

### THE GROWING COST OF HOSPITAL MAINTENANCE.

At a Council meeting of the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund, held last week at the Mansion House, the chair, in the absence of the Lord Mayor, was taken by Sir Sydney Waterlow—who, with a few friends, inaugurated the Fund at the Old London Tavern in 1872. The report of the Committee of Distribution was received, and the payment of awards to hospitals and dispensaries ordered. The principal topic of interest touched upon was the constantly increasing expenditure of hospitals in the maintenance of patients. Thus the average cost per week of each patient treated at twenty-one of the principal hospitals amounted to £1 16s. 6½d. in 1902, while in 1892 the average was £1 12s. 3d. In 1902 the cost per occupied bed per week varied between £1 1s. 3d. and £2 18s. 5d. in the hospitals referred to. While recognising the fact that the expense must necessarily have increased to some extent with the progress of scientific treatment and nursing, the Committee still thought that the expense in some hospitals was higher than justified by these considerations. They had reduced the bases of award in thirty-eight cases.

To hold an even balance, avoiding shortsighted economies which can only result in inefficiency on the one hand, and unjustifiable extravagance not resulting in increase of efficiency on the other, is a difficult problem, requiring constant watchfulness on the part of responsible officials in all departments of hospital administration. The fact which the Hospital Sunday Fund has brought out, that in twenty-one hospitals—presumably receiving much the same classes of cases—the expenditure per head varies so greatly, seems to point to a necessity for greater care on the part of some institutions. When the extreme difficulty of raising the funds for hospital maintenance is taken into consideration, it is obviously a duty to see that every penny contributed is spent wisely and well.

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