

The Hospital World.

HOSPITAL WASTE.

The remarks of the Prince of Wales at the recent meeting of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London on the subject of economical administration has naturally occasioned much comment in the Press.

A peculiarly ridiculous, and characteristically un-businesslike article by Sir Henry Burdett on "Hospital Waste" appeared in the *Daily Mail* of Saturday last. Stripped of much verbosity his argument amounts to this, that waste is a bad thing, that there is evidence of waste in several of the London hospitals, and there are directions in which an effective remedy may be applied.

His panacea is to pay the visiting medical staffs of hospitals an infinitesimal amount for their services, so that Committees may not feel embarrassed when they consider it necessary to curtail ward expenditure. At the present time the writer of the article referred to believes the principle of free medical service often "paralyzes action and has grown in practice to the dimensions of a great abuse." Therefore, the medical staffs of hospitals should be paid at the rate of £6 10s. 0d. per annum per occupied bed.

Secondly, to provide this munificent remuneration economy must be effected in other directions by the appointment of a medical superintendent in charge of every department of a hospital, a system which Sir Henry Burdett calculates, though he carefully abstains from proving, would effect a saving of £20 per bed. Any more obsolete suggestion than to attempt to make dictators in a business concern of men who, if worth their salt, are essentially men of science, it would be difficult to conceive.

The *Daily Mail* of Tuesday, December 27th, published an admirable reply to Sir Henry Burdett's extraordinary suggestions by the Hon. Sydney Holland, who points out that the sum of £150 per annum, at which Sir Henry's proposition works out, is not a magnificent one with which to remunerate a man earning his thousands a year, for visiting a hospital three times a week. Also that the eminent man who is to act as Superintendent must be paid at least £700 a year, and then must be a failure, or contemplate failure in his own profession to be willing to sacrifice his career for such a salary. He also points out that medical men are proverbially bad men of business, and that the organisation of a big hospital, including the commissariat department, is essentially a business matter. Mr. Holland advocates the appointment of skilled men in each department, over them a secretary or house governor with a good head for business, and responsible to the Committee of Management, composed of men of every variety of experience. Add

women to the Committee, and this arrangement is as good as can be.

We gather from the Prince of Wales' remarks that where the leakage occurs in hospital management is largely in the domestic department. This is not surprising, as the majority of the hospitals criticised have not an expert domestic economist upon their Boards of Management.

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



Her Majesty the Queen contributed the first 1,000 dinners of the 6,000 provided by the Church Army at its different labour homes on Sunday and Monday.

Princess Henry of Battenberg has become an annual subscriber to the funds of the North-Eastern Hospital for Children, Hackney Road, E.

With the King's approval, Lieutenant-Colonel (temporary Surgeon-General) A. Keogh, C.B., has been appointed Director-General of the Army Medical Service, vice Surgeon-General Sir W. Taylor, K.C.B., retired. This will be a very popular appointment in the Nursing Service, as Surgeon-General Keogh is known to hold liberal and progressive views on nursing matters.

Lord Strathcona has arranged to preside at a festival dinner at the Whitehall Rooms in aid of the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic, on April 13th next.

The Duke of Portland, as President, with the Chairman, Treasurer, and Senior Physician of the East London Hospital for Children, Shadwell, has issued an appeal on behalf of this deserving charity. For thirty-five years, by careful administration of its not very plentiful funds, the hospital has been able to pay its way; but within the last eighteen months it has been compelled to borrow from its bankers to meet current expenses, and now needs £4,000, of which only £400 has been subscribed, to meet its liabilities before the end of the year. The hospital works in a densely-populated and very poor neighbourhood, and we are sure expends the money entrusted to it to the very best advantage.

The Convention drawn up by the Conference on Hospital Ships was signed last week at the Hague by the Delegates of the Powers in the presence of the Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs. It provides that hospital ships fulfilling the conditions prescribed in the first three articles of the Convention concluded at the Hague on July 29th, 1899, for the adaptation of the principles of the Geneva Convention of August, 1864, to naval warfare, shall in time of war be exempt in the ports of the contracting parties from all dues and taxes imposed on vessels for the benefit of the State. It is binding only on the contracting Powers, and ceases to be obligatory in a war between such Powers when a non-contracting Power joins one of the belligerents.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)