

## Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



The Duke of Connaught will preside at the seventy-eighth festival dinner of the Royal Free Hospital, to be held at the Hotel Cecil, on November 28th next, for the purpose of raising funds, of which the hospital is in urgent need at the present time.

Mrs. L. A. Hills, of Great Berkhamsted, has bequeathed £3,000 to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in memory of her late father.

The Duchess of Albany, President of the Kingston Victoria Hospital, paid her first visit to the institution this week for the purpose of opening the ward extensions carried out through the generosity of Mr. W. E. Green. A presentation of purses was made by members of the Ladies' Association.

Statistics showing in some measure the magnitude of the work carried on by the hospitals, dispensaries, etc., of London have been published by the Distribution Committee of the Hospital Saturday Fund in a recent circular. The tables have been prepared from the returns received from 152 institutions, and represent the work of these medical charities during 1905. Some big figures are dealt with. For example:

Total number of beds at thirty-one general hospitals, 5,748.

Average number of beds occupied, 4,795.

Total number of in-patients, 74,172.

Total number of separate out-patients, 542,229.

Total number of separate casualty cases, 584,719.

No fewer than 55,695 home visits were made. Payments by in-patients amounted to £8,143; by out-patients, £4,941. The following figures show how the expenditure is apportioned:

Net income from investments, £143,349.

Total cost of maintenance, £502,352; total cost of management, £38,063.

Mr. Walter G. Carnt has been elected by the Board of Management as General Superintendent and Secretary of the Manchester Royal Infirmary, in succession to the late Mr. Saunder. Mr. Carnt is at present holding a similar position in the Derbyshire Royal Hospital at Derby, and is also Secretary of the Infirmary Convalescent Home, Holbrooke, near Derby, and the Infirmary Sunday Committee in the Midland town. Prior to 1892, when he was appointed to his present position, Mr. Carnt was for eleven years a clerk in H.M. Civil Service, attached to H.M. prison at Derby, and for eight years of that period was clerk to the Visiting Justices of the prison. He is forty-six years of age. The salary of his new post commences at £600 per annum. There was a very large number of applications for the appointment.

## Midwifery Notes.

A conference to discuss the question of the proposed Registration of Midwives was recently held in Melbourne, when Dr. Felix Meyer (who was voted to the Chair), Miss Glover, and Miss Johnstone represented the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association.

In opening the proceedings, the Chairman explained that the conference had been called to discuss the very unsatisfactory state of obstetric nursing among the poor, and to elicit opinions as to the best methods of dealing with the problems of minimising the evil of the untrained midwife and of improving obstetric nursing for the poorer classes.

The following resolutions were carried unanimously:—

"That in the opinion of this Conference, the present system of midwifery attendance by untrained women, involving as it does serious loss of life and ill health amongst the community, calls for radical and immediate change."

This conference approves of—

I.—For the nursing of the poor:

(a) An extension, under satisfactory conditions, of an outdoor maternity department of the Women's Hospital, and

(b) The establishment by the District Nursing Association of obstetric nurses in all suburbs.

II.—For the nursing of the less well-to-do that—

(c) Steps be taken to obtain the support of the friendly societies, and medical men generally, in favour of the system of attendance by visiting obstetric nurses.

In the course of the discussion upon these resolutions, Dr. Springthorpe expressed the opinion that any Act for the registration of midwives would be premature, an opinion which he said was shared both by the Royal Victorian and the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association. Dr. Meyer thought that when registration of nurses was established, registration of obstetric nurses might form part of a general registration scheme.

Summarising the position *Una* states that from the public point of view nothing but the sternest necessity could justify the handing over of the poor, simply because of their poverty, to women who are undeniably less competent than those in attendance upon others more fortunately situated; from the medical point of view a Midwives' Act would necessarily create an inferior order of practitioner utterly unequal to the grave responsibilities of her position; and from the point of view of the trained nurse it would be as unfair as it is unnecessary to certificate a class of inferiorly-trained women and place them in a position of equality and even superiority to those who have completed an approved course of both general and special training.

There is reason to believe that a satisfactory start will shortly be made along the lines indicated in the above report.

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