

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Albany, who has always taken an active interest in the welfare of the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic, in Queen's Square, W.C., the chief part of which is a memorial to the late Duke of Albany—has been requested by the Governors of the hospital to accept the Presidency of the Jubilee Committee, and her Royal Highness has consented to do so. The scheme of alterations and improvements, which has been submitted to, and has received the approval of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, includes the enlargement of the out-patient department and of the nurses' quarters, and the provision of a new physical exercise-room and of a class-room for the massage and electrical school.

The Earl of Plymouth, Lord Lieutenant of Glamorganshire, has consented to act as President of the twenty-fourth annual congress and exhibition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, to be held at Cardiff, from July 13th to 22nd. The public meeting to inaugurate arrangements for the congress will be held at the City Hall, Cardiff, on Thursday, February 6th.

We like the way Mother Nature takes her little revenges. The rat just now is found to be responsible, according to the Board of Agriculture, for an enormous amount of damage, and also of carrying disease. A part of the plague is due, in the opinion of one great authority, to the upsetting of the right balance of nature. The destruction of owls by keepers has been especially favourable to the growth of all sorts of vermin, and a well-known sportsman goes so far as to say that he would look with pleasure towards an increase of the larger vermin, such as stoats or even polecats, on account of their useful co-operation in keeping down the plague of rats.

The nine enterprising pauper inmates of Lambeth Workhouse who petitioned the guardians to pay them wages for skilled work have been doomed to disappointment. The petition was referred to the master, who has decided that the extra allowances of tobacco and snuff permitted by the regulations sufficiently meet the case. Snuffed out indeed!

The late M. Rouff, the well-known Paris dress-maker, has all our sympathy in the solicitude he showed for his dogs by the provisions of his will. He left several thousands to a friend for their care. The provisions prove the attachment he had for his "best friends," whom he called "his dear loves," and whom he recommended to the solicitude of his friend, telling him that he had the "care of a soul." It is people who feel this veneration for animals who are conscientious anti-vivisectionists.

Women as Medical Inspectors of Schools.

It is very regrettable that in some instances it is proposed to offer lower salaries to women appointed as medical inspectors of schools on the ground of their sex, and we are glad to note an influentially-signed letter in the daily press asserting that it would be contrary to the public interest that women doing work for which they are admitted by the Board of Education to be "specially suitable" should not be paid at the same rate as men doing identical work.

Legal Matters.

Miss Bessie Hayles, a professional nurse, was severely censured at an inquest held recently at Richmond by Dr. M. P. Taylor, J.P., into the circumstances of the death of Mrs. Dixon, a Christian Scientist. Miss Hayles stated that she had had three years' hospital training and six years' nursing experience subsequently, but had given up the ordinary work and become a Christian Scientist. She explained that she was not treating the deceased. Mrs. Davidson was. She went to see her as a friend. She noticed her difficult breathing and had cough, and made her as comfortable as possible, making her bed and seeing that she was warm. In reply to the Coroner she said she would not apply a poultice, but would put a hot-water bottle to the feet. She would give beef-tea to a patient, though it was a stimulant, and she did not believe in stimulants, but she would not give salvolatile or brandy. She was with the patient on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and left her better at nine o'clock on each occasion. On the Saturday the patient was very ill, and she stayed with her till one, and went back between five and six. She did not suggest any further treatment; the patient did not ask for it. The Coroner informed the nurse that he, with the jury, looked to her as a trained woman, who must have known the consequences of neglecting to call in a doctor. The witness, with some hesitation, admitted that she did. The medical evidence was to the effect that the patient would, in all probability, have recovered if she had had medical advice. In summing up, the Coroner pointed out that the nurse, as an experienced woman, should have seen that Christian Science was not succeeding, and should have insisted on calling in a doctor. There was no doubt in his mind there had been gross neglect. The jury gave a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, and desired to add a rider that death was accelerated by the neglect of two of the witnesses. The Coroner pointed out that this would lead to a verdict of manslaughter, and advised the jury to retire again. Eventually they added a rider: "That in the opinion of the jury Mrs. Davidson, and especially Nurse Hayles, are deserving of severe censure for their neglect in not obtaining medical aid." The Coroner remarked that he agreed with every word.

It is inconceivable that a trained nurse should allow a patient to die without attempting to secure medical aid.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)