

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

Lord Strathcona has accepted the post of President of the National Hospital for the Paralysed, Queen Square, Bloomsbury.

The Home Secretary has announced that the value of existing methods for the treatment of inebriety by the use of drugs is to be investigated by the Departmental Committee upon the operation of the law relating to inebriates and to their detention in reformatories.

Now that Parliament has placed the principle of probation for criminals on the Statute Book, and has appointed Mr. W. Wheatley the Probation Officer for the Metropolis, special interest attaches to the 48th annual report of St. Giles's Christian Mission, of which he is the superintendent. Under the title "The Test of Time" it gives statistics showing that within the last thirty-one years the Mission has provided 568,804 free breakfasts to discharged prisoners; 134,996 such have been assisted; 10,242 convicts received on their release from penal servitude, and 123,633 have signed the pledge. In addition to its religious services the institution also maintains seaside, convalescent, and orphanage homes.

The Commissioners in Lunacy refer in their annual report just published to an inquiry held in consequence of allegations made to the Board that certain mistakes in the identity of patients sent under contract to Fisherton House, Salisbury, by the Asylums Committee of the London County Council, had been made on their reception at that institution. The matter was the more serious in that some of the patients concerned had died and had been buried under wrong names. The alleged mistakes concerned patients sent from the Banstead and Claybury Asylums. The Commissioners say in their finding that, assuming the correctness of their conclusions, of which they themselves have no doubt, the gravity of the error, owing to the deaths of three of the patients concerned, becomes apparent, since rectification will be necessary in regard to intimations to relatives, in the certification of the deaths, in the liabilities of the Boards of Guardians by whom they were maintained, and in the records of the Lunacy Commission.

The new Nurses' Home and extensions at the City Hospital for Infectious Diseases at Walker Gate, Newcastle, were last week formally opened by Alderman Dr. A. Wilson.

The Emperor William has agreed to the making of a grant of 100,000 marks (£5,000) from the contingency fund to the Robert Koch Institute for combating tuberculosis.

Plague, it is announced from Mombasa, has broken out at Port Florence. The Uganda Railway has, in consequence, been obliged to discontinue booking freight to the lake ports, owing to the lack of labour to handle the goods from train to steamer.

Professional Review.

THE SCIENCE AND ART OF NURSING. VOLUME II.

In the second volume of the Science and Art of Nursing, published by Messrs. Cassell and Co., La Belle Sauvage, E.C., the articles on the Theory of Nursing, are continued, and Dr. W. C. Bosanquet, F.R.C.P., concludes that on Elementary Physiology, referred to last week.

ELEMENTARY BACTERIOLOGY.

Bacteriology, all important as an elementary knowledge of it is to nurses in their work, is still a subject of which the majority know little, and the chapter by Dr. Charles Slater, F.C.S., is, therefore, of interest. In his introduction, Dr. Slater says: "The way in which the occurrence of a single case of an infectious disease is followed by a series of similar cases, until an infected community is swept by the epidemic, irresistibly suggests that the cause of such a disease must be alive, since it is only in living material that this capacity for unlimited and specific increase is found. The idea that it is a living organism—a *contagium vivum*—which produces epidemic diseases is of very great antiquity. But though the idea is old, and was supported by many arguments from analogy, the proof of its truth is comparatively modern."

ELEMENTARY PHARMACY.

Mr. C. Edward Sage, who contributes a chapter on the above subject, says: "It is often necessary that a member of the nursing staff of a hospital or infirmary should have some knowledge of the methods by which medicines are compounded. Whenever possible, therefore, a nurse should obtain some instruction in a dispensary or pharmacy.

"If a nurse has the opportunity towards the end of her training, she can, of course, study the subject then, but it is wiser, where circumstances permit, to give six months to the work subsequently to finishing at the hospital. Numerous schools of pharmacy are to be found in Great Britain, the fees varying from twelve to eighteen guineas for the six months' course of instruction and practical work. Intending students should make full inquiries before entering a school, and not be too much influenced by advertisements quoting the wonderful salaries to be obtained by lady dispensers. The result is sometimes a fiasco. The training is not always what it ought to be, nor is it true that the position of lady dispenser is highly remunerated. A nurse, however, can use her knowledge of dispensing to advantage in her daily work, and where a Sister who can dispense is preferred she will often be able to obtain extra payment for her services."

PUBLIC HYGIENE AND SANITARY LAW.

The "Elements of Public Hygiene and Sanitary Law" are dealt with by Dr. A. H. Hogarth, D.P.H., who points out that "Preventive medicine is a science of which the scope is ever growing wider, and it should be more and more the aim of the nurse, as of the medical practitioner, to prevent rather than to cure disease." He, therefore, invites attention to some of the commoner health problems.

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