

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

On Sunday afternoon the Prince and Princess of Wales visited the Royal Convalescent Home at Osborne, and spent an hour in looking over the institution, escorted by Colonel C. R. Kilkelly, the Home Governor.

Princess Alexander of Teck has consented to open the new Nurses' Home and Out-Patient Department of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital on Tuesday, April 20th. The new buildings are in Great Portland Street, and the Committee hope to arrange the opening of the new hospital itself during the coming summer.

Earl Waldegrave presided last week over the Annual General Meeting of the Hospital for Invalid Gentlewomen, 90, Harley Street, W. The report for the past year states that 178 patients were treated, many of them being very serious cases. This Hospital, which is well worthy of support, is for ladies of limited means, and meets a real and increasing need on the part of those who, in their ordinary lives, are not objects of charity, but whose small earnings or means make them incapable of bearing the heavy expense of long illness. Patients come to it from all parts of the country, India, and the Colonies. The lease of the present Hospital, 90, Harley Street, expires this year, and an up-to-date and compact Hospital of 32 beds is being built in Lisson Grove. An urgent appeal is made for £6,500, so that it may be open free of debt. Donations will be gratefully received by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. William Bridgeman, M.P.

The Duke of Argyll will preside at the 64th anniversary dinner of the German Hospital, Dalston, which will be held at the Whitehall Rooms on Friday, May 7th.

The great Louis XV. Fête of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, to be held at Olympia in June, promises to be the charity function of the year.

The Royal Sea-Bathing Hospital at Margate is one of the most valuable institutions we possess, and at the recent annual Court of Governors it was announced that the surplus revenue had been entirely expended in the erection and equipment of two wards for observation purposes. Two extra verandahs are now being erected at a cost of about £600, for which it is hoped funds may be forthcoming.

The Army Council has intimated to general officers commanding that the working of the Territorial Medical Service in last year's training season reflects great credit upon all concerned for its thoroughness in face of the many difficulties inseparable from the early stages of reorganisation.

Our Foreign Letter.

NURSING ON A SUGAR ESTATE.

Five-thirty p.m., and the sun's rays still striking too hotly to make walking a pleasure! The "chokra" has raised one of the sun blinds on the verandah, and I look on a landscape that has grown familiar to my eye. To the left a gray haze has clouded the rugged peaks, and is creeping across the fields of young sugar canes. In front of the verandah the rose bushes have scarcely a green leaf on their long, woody branches, and the roses, having yielded all their perfume to the merciless tropical sun, look bleached and languid.

Everything appears parched and thirsty, with the exception of a row of young cocoanut palm trees and a clump of scarlet geraniums. Beyond the palm trees the old ruins of a sugar mill throw shadows on the group of straw-roofed huts, built against and irregularly round it.

A few scraggy, black goats nibble at the long, rank grass, which an old Indian woman is dexterously cutting for her cow. Along the old, broad French road come two little Indian maids, not from school, but from work in the fields. Each has a piece of dirty rag, worn apron-fashion over her scanty skirt, and a "pioche" slung on the left shoulder. They are chattering gaily, but, catching sight of my cap, stop to stare for a few seconds, and call "Bonjour, Mam'selle."

The barn-like building to the right is the estate hospital and dispensary, for the care of the sick coolies, their wives, and children. The ten-bed ward, for the men, occupies three-fourths of the building, and the remaining quarter contains four beds for women. The only form of bed a coolie is accustomed to is a mat flung on the mud floor of his hut, so that, although there may be no pillow-cases on the hospital pillows, and the blankets appear rather grimy, he is embarrassed by the luxury of a mattress, preferring to lie untended in his hut.

This lean-to (x), which will be blown away by the first severe cyclone, is the dispensary and also the office of the "Infirmier," who lives in a bungalow near the hospital with his small black wife and large family. These estate hospitals are under the supervision of a qualified medical man, who pays two or three visits a week, or more frequently if necessary, and is paid by the estate owner.

The "Infirmier" makes periodical visits to the Indian huts in search of sick coolies, and it not infrequently happens that he discovers a man with pneumonia struggling for health in the darkest corner of the dark, airless hut, or a child with erysipelas, and the other children squatted round it. They only report themselves ill after they have tried all their own superstitious cures and failed. Then it is too late to do any good, and consequently the hospital is avoided, as a place in which one is sure to die. One evening I saw two Indian girls bending over a woman who was lying huddled up on the grass at the edge of a cane-field. On inquiry I found that the mother of the girls, who was suffering from malaria, had insisted on leaving the hospital, and was on her way home when the

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