

PUBLIC HEALTH

CARE OF CHILDREN AFTER ASSAULT.
GIFT FOR RESEARCH.

The Institute of Medical Psychology (The "Tavistock Clinic") has received an anonymous donation of £300 "to start research work on the remedial treatment of children who suffer nervous troubles as an after-effect of assault."

Investigation of this particular problem, to which no research work has hitherto been specially directed, will be begun immediately. On the Institute's Medical Advisory Board are Lord Dawson of Penn and other famous physicians.

"GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT" BEQUEST.

The Institute of Medical Psychology has received an offer from a doctor who undertakes to bequeath £100 to the hospital if twenty-nine other men will do the same. The arrangement, he suggests, would be a "gentleman's agreement" and any bequests revocable in the event of "difficult circumstances."

"NERVOUS" LONDON CHILDREN.

Seventy-seven children from L.C.C. schools were referred to the Institute of Medical Psychology during the past twelve months. Their "ailments" included temper, nervousness, stealing, stammering, and other troubles. Fifteen of the children were sent for consultation only.

Of those who received treatment, "satisfactory adjustment" was effected in the case of 23 per cent., and "partial adjustment" in 16 per cent., while 46 per cent. were still undergoing treatment at the end of the period. The remaining cases were either "unsuitable" or affected by "unco-operating parents."

BLINDNESS IN INDIA.

"APPALLING PREVALENCE."

NATIONAL INSTITUTES EMERGENCY MOVE.

An appalling prevalence of blindness in India is revealed by figures published by the National Institute for the Blind. These give an estimate of

1,500,000 Indians totally blind, and

4,500,000 Indians with "gravely affected" sight.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, a member of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind, declares that a large proportion of the latter 4½ millions are so bad that they would be certifiable as blind if they lived in this country.

Much of the trouble is preventible, and it is with a view to checking the trouble in its earlier stages that the National Institute has made an emergency grant to finance a propaganda scheme. The money will be used by the Indian Junior Red Cross Society in distributing pamphlets in the vernacular and in organising lectures to teachers.

A Memorial prepared for the Institute by leading authorities was recently presented to the Government of India urging official action, but, though the Government was sympathetic, nothing could be done "owing to the present financial stringency."

As the percentage of preventible blindness in India is supposed to be about 90 the Institute determined to act immediately through the Junior Red Cross Society in India—an organisation which has made great strides in recent years, particularly in the Punjab and United Provinces, and has the support and encouragement of the authorities.

"It is a formidable problem involving work among a population as large as and in an area as big as that of Europe," Sir Michael O'Dwyer said. "But somebody had to tackle it, and who is better fitted to do so than the National Institute?"

THE HISTORY OF ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

VOL. II. 1600—1800.

By F. G. PARSONS, D.Sc., F.R.C.S., F.S.A.

Those who have read the first volume of "The History of St. Thomas's Hospital," by Dr. F. G. Parsons, F.R.C.S., F.S.A., will be eager to extend their knowledge of this great Royal Foundation by obtaining the second volume published this month by Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd., 36, Essex Street, London, W.C.2.

Dr. Parsons says in his Preface "As a definite record the present volume will, I hope, be found better than the last; but a good deal of the interest and charm of the mediæval days will, I fear, be missed. . . . We lose, or to me it seems a loss, the close personal interest in their gifts of men like Dick Whittington, who 'would not shame no yonge women in no wyse,' and of William de Hameldin who gave his land to provide seemly vestments for the poor shabby brethren of the hospital when celebrating Mass.

"These changes are like the growing up of a child whose ways we have learnt to love. They are natural changes and if they did not come there would be something wrong; yet they leave a gap which, though it may mean progress is rather saddening."

Nevertheless, there is much interest and charm in the present volume as students of nursing history will realise. The illustrations also are of great interest especially one of the statue by Grinling Gibbons of Sir Robert Clayton, which the court had decided to have done "in the best marble." The author comments: "Since Grinling Gibbons was at this time a very celebrated man his fee was probably large, and since he has left only a small amount of statuary work, the monument to Clayton, which now stands in the Medical School quadrangle, will probably become one of London's art treasures. It is a curious thing that, until these minutes were read through at the present time, nobody seems to have realised that we owned such an important piece of Gibbons' work."

Later we read: "A clause in Clayton's will directed that his statue should be preserved from any 'spoye or hurt save only by time.' I fear that poor Clayton must have turned in his grave a few years ago when, after a smoking concert, a student climbed on to the shoulders of his statue and broke off the hand which held a parchment scroll. It is sad to have to confess that at the time no one seemed to remember anything about Clayton, and the hand was not even stuck on again. Now, however, we understand the value and beauty of this piece of Grinling Gibbons' work and have taken all steps to preserve it which our advisers from South Kensington could suggest: the hand, unfortunately, seems to be utterly lost." The pity of it!

The story of the hospital in this volume begins when Queen Elizabeth was still upon the throne though her subjects know that she cannot rule them much longer. It carries us through Jacobean days, the time when Charles I was King, a period in which the hospital becomes Parliamentary, and during the Commonwealth, a time of war, pestilence, fires, and the "Quo Warranto" under Charles II. The "Quo Warranto" was a writ which dates from the time of Edward I, and in February 1682 the governors were informed that a Royal Commission had been appointed to visit the hospital and inspect its Charter under this writ. "At this time Charles was ruling without a Parliament, and as the strength of his opponents lay in the towns these were attacked by writs of 'Quo Warranto,' calling on them to show cause why their charters should not be declared void on the ground of abuse of privilege. When the charters were surrendered fresh ones were granted, in which all officials but those in sympathy with the King were removed from office."

In the case of St. Thomas's Hospital the court replied to the commissioners that "it did not possess the original

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)