

## A LAYMAN'S VIEW OF HOSPITAL WORK.\*

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During the past thirty years I have every year visited Great Britain and the continent of Europe, and nearly every State of the American Union. During these visits, interested as I am in hospital work in this city of my birth, I naturally felt interested in this work in other cities. My visits were not inspired by curiosity. My idea was to gather knowledge, so that the particular class of work which I had at heart might be benefited. When I tell you that these visits covered not only close inspection of the work, but heart-to-heart talks with the superintendents, lady superintendents and matrons of all the principal hospitals for adults in large cities of Europe, Great Britain and Ireland and the United States, and in every hospital for sick children in the same area, I think you will admit that my mileage ought to have been given me an experience in the line of information-getting that should have availed to advantage the institution that I am connected with, and so it did. I, of course, took it for granted that in all these great hospitals good work was being done in the surgical and medical departments by the skilled men who were in charge. Of surgery and medicine I know nothing, and this paper concerns only the business end of the work that is in your care and mine.

It struck me during my tours that in Great Britain, Ireland and the United States and Canada the layman plays a most important part. The largest and best hospitals in Great Britain owe their foundation and construction to the energy, enterprise and philanthropy of laymen—investments that total up millions and millions of pounds in sterling money, either left by bequest or paid during the lifetime for palatial edifices to shelter the sick and afflicted—all from the pockets of laymen.

Hospitals may be dependent for support in part from governments and from municipalities, or from voluntary contributions, but in the final analysis the layman pays the bill, and, be it said, as a general rule he does it ungrudgingly. Hospital construction and reconstruction is going on all over the British Empire, its colonies and in the United States of America. These buildings are constructed largely by the contributions of laymen.

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