

to neighbouring properties, whilst securing a most thorough and efficient system for the Home.

At length, on July 14, 1884, the Home was formally opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales, accompanied by their three daughters, the name of the lady with whom the movement originated being given it, by desire of the Committee, with the special approval of the Princess of Wales, the Patroness.

It is situated on the top of Brockley Hill, near Stanmore, Middlesex, about 450 feet above the sea level, on a gravelly soil with a substratum of clay, with a good southern and western aspect, and is about ten miles from the Marble Arch in a north-westerly direction. It stands on a freehold of four acres, part of which serves as a pleasure-ground for the convalescents (and includes lawn tennis and croquet grounds), the remainder being laid out as kitchen-garden, orchard, &c., and forming an outer belt to which patients are not admitted, so that they cannot approach the boundary fence. The freehold is bounded on the south and east by a road, so that it is secured from encroachment or being in any way overlooked on two of its sides; a common and arable land forms its western boundary, and a high brick wall divides its kitchen-garden on the north, from the grounds of an adjoining property of seven acres in extent, on which stands the only house in the vicinity.

The house itself consists of a dining-room and drawing-room, each with a southern aspect, for the use of the convalescents paying for first-class accommodation; a large day-room, looking south, west, and north, for the ordinary class patients; a matron's office and library, with the usual servants' offices, on the ground floor, beneath which is a well-lighted and ventilated basement, in which are the cellars, furnaces for heating the warming apparatus and the hot water supply to the bath-rooms, &c., so that the sitting-rooms are thoroughly protected from damp. On the first-floor are the bedrooms and bath-rooms for first-class patients, and a play-room for children in wet weather; whilst the top floor contains the dormitories and bath-room for the second-class patients. The annexe contains closets, slop-sink, and lift, is built apart from the house, with glazed brick walls and tiled floors, for more perfect cleansing, and communicates with the house on each floor by means of a short passage shut off at either end by a swing door. The earth system is adopted there by securing the house from any possible danger from sewer gas.

A private omnibus belonging to the Home fetches the patients from the Hospitals or their own homes, thus protecting the public from risk of infection, as well as sparing the partially recovered invalids the fatigue and exposure of a

railway journey with the usual changes of conveyance, &c. No extra charge is made for the use of this omnibus, man, and horse, except when the distance of the patient's residence is beyond the reach of one horse, when a second horse to meet the omnibus half way can be hired, or the omnibus sent by rail, the extra expense being in these cases borne by the patient.

The house is planned for the reception of about forty patients, but owing to want of funds, only a part of it was originally furnished, and the number of patients admitted at one time was limited to twelve. In consequence of the great press of applications during the latter part of the year 1886, it was, however, deemed advisable to furnish the remainder of the rooms, although the debt of £500 incurred at first starting the Home had not been paid off. Notwithstanding this increase of accommodation, several applications had to be refused during the last few weeks of the year. A great fluctuation in the demand on the resources of the Home will always exist as a necessary accompaniment of a disease having periods of increase and decrease, the convalescents from which cannot wait several weeks for admission, as is the common practice with the ordinary Convalescent Homes. This irregularity of demand renders the working of the institution more difficult; at one time the staff and housekeeping arrangements seeming to be in excess of the requirements of the establishment, whilst at another they are barely equal to the work laid upon them. The impossibility of obtaining occasional extra help from outside, the difficulty of finding even permanent servants, who must have had the fever at one time in their life, and the fact that the number of inmates, unlike that of nearly all other Convalescent Homes, is always greatest in the winter months, when numerous fires, lights, &c., entail heavier expenditure of money and labour, make the economy of the Home a source of much anxious thought and responsibility.

The most pressing difficulty remaining is the want of funds. The whole of the funds raised up to the date of the opening were expended in the purchase of the freehold, the laying out of the grounds, and the completion and adaptation of the unfinished house for the purposes of the institution, together with the above-named outlay for water supply and drainage works. A loan of £500 had to be raised in order to furnish and start the Home. Part of this debt remains to be cleared off. The entire plan could not, however, be carried out, and in order to complete the institution and render it thoroughly efficient, there yet remains the need of funds amounting to some £2,000 or £3,000 to build a lodge for the gardener and his

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)