

## Institution Histories.

### THE NEW WILLESDEN COTTAGE HOSPITAL.

**A**BOUT three weeks ago, another addition was made to the list of our Cottage Hospitals, this time in the pretty village of Willesden; for it has not yet altogether developed the flaunting, self-sufficient air of the ordinary London suburb. But as some 700 new houses are built every year in the neighbourhood, it is perfectly obvious that the erection of such an Institution had become an absolute necessity, more especially as hitherto there was no available accommodation for the sick poor nearer than St. Mary's, Paddington. A large Marquee was put up in front of the building; a band and guard of honour was provided by the local Volunteers, and representative clergy of the district were invited to attend. Miss Balfour, who was accompanied by her brother, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, performed the opening ceremony of turning the silver key. The President, the Earl of Aberdeen, who has property in the neighbourhood, was unable to be present; but the Chairman of the Trustees, Sir Bradford Leslie K.C.I.E., and the Honorary Secretaries Messrs. H. E. Goodwin, and J. J. Hanbury, received the visitors. Doubtless, however, the most interesting personality present, from a practical point of view, was Mr. J. Passmore Edwards, who, by his generous gift of £2,000, entirely defrayed the building expenses, adding thereby another to the many districts he has richly benefitted, and whose inhabitants will long remember his name as a household word.

Entering Willesden, writes our representative, from the Junction Station, the place has all the appearance of a wide-awake country town, the character being maintained even in the peculiar brown complexion of some of the children. Turning one's face in the direction of the Hospital, somewhat old-fashioned cottages with neat, old-fashioned gardens, in which are flourishing clematis, larkspur, monkshood, hollyhocks, pinks, etc., claim the attention of the passer by. Harlesden Lane, in which the Hospital is situated, winds and turns, as does many another private road in the country; but, sad to tell, though the hedges are still intact, and, indeed, are so far true to their old traditions as to produce the deadly nightshade, honey-suckle, and the convolvulus, the grass and ditch on one side is a thing of the past, being replaced by a pebbly, flag-bordered foot path; the grass and nettles on the other side being

probably destined in a short time to make way for a like "improvement." On the right, through the trees, but still at a respectable distance, the smoke and the builder are only too evident; but on the left the country stretches away and away, the ground gently undulating, and the whole landscape being fairly well wooded. Further on towards the left a detached red-brick building, almost skirting the road, hovers in sight; but on the opposite side of the road palisadings separate the path from pretty gardens and comfortable villas.

The plot of ground surrounding the Hospital has not yet been planted; but the external beauty and variety of aspect of the building itself is suggestive of cosiness within, heightened, perhaps, by the pouring rain without.

Within, every room is comfortable and cheerful; and instinctively one feels that the Matron in charge is part and parcel of her surroundings; her kind motherly manner being admirably adapted to calm and soothe the patients who will be so dependent upon her for weeks together. She was full of enthusiasm, and with a natural curiosity wondered what her first patient would be like. It must be remembered that upon her has fallen the task of starting and preparing the Hospital as a Hospital; and that upon her will depend the character and colour that the Institution will bear. But she has behind her a record of five years at University College Hospital, two years at the City Road Chest Hospital, and four at the Temperance Hospital, Hampstead Road, which combined with her faculty for sympathy, and capacity for arrangement and administration augurs at once every possibility of success. Upon her, herself, however, devolves the task of making prophecy fact.

The two weeks previous to the opening ceremony were of course full to overflowing of work and thought. Everything had to be bought; and her brain had to be racked to think of all the hundred and one odd things necessary to start fair and square. Lists had to be drawn up to be submitted to the Committee for their approval; then came the difficulty of choice—and every woman will sympathise with this—and finally the laborious work of arranging and putting things in their proper place. But such an experience is very pleasant, if only from the extreme rarity of its occurrence.

After a few minutes chat, Miss Frost kindly conducted me over her establishment, the very compactness of which was quite delightful. On the ground floor, to the right of the entrance passage, is the Matron's sitting room; to the left a tiny waiting room. Then comes a transverse passage, one end terminating in the men's, the other in the women's

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