

Institution Histories.

THE ABERDEEN MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

THE new Maternity Hospital in Aberdeen, connected with the Dispensary, is nearly completed. A house adjoining the Dispensary building has been re-modelled and converted into a small but sufficiently convenient hospital. The situation is excellent as, although standing in the centre of one of the poorest districts of the town, the old Guest Row—a name supposed to be a corruption of Holy Ghost Row—it has on one side the open, airy and quiet space belonging to the Dispensary. This space was no doubt formerly included in one of the large gardens belonging to the ancient houses, once the residences of wealthy and aristocratic families, whose carved doorways, stuccoed ceilings, and fine oak staircases are still the admiration of the occasional tourist visitor, although they are now tenanted by the poorest classes. The finest specimen of these old houses is now the Victoria model lodging-house. No better site could therefore have been chosen for the new hospital, and if, in all respects, its size and arrangements are hardly suited to its purpose, it may answer very well until the scheme on foot for building a new Dispensary can be carried into effect. One unfortunate mistake has been made. The bath room, instead of being conveniently placed near the entrance or admission room, is at the top of the house. It has been forgotten that patients requiring admission into this species of hospital are likely to be *in extremis*, and must, with all speed and at the least possible expenditure of time and fatigue, be conveyed to the ward destined for them. It may, however, be possible to make some temporary arrangement which will obviate the inconvenience of the present plan. Would it not be well if, before beginning to build hospitals, large and small, Architects and Directors would condescend to admit to their counsels some of the humble women-workers whose practical experience might suggest some trifling, yet needful, considerations too often undreamt of in the philosophy of the masculine mind.

The most critical and difficult part of the work still lies before the authorities. Much wisdom, tact and caution will be required in choosing the staff and determining the internal arrangements. In such a hospital a mixture of classes is inevitable, yet care should be taken to avoid such a mixture as far as possible. Respectability or the want of it should not be considered in the question of

admission, but once admitted the difference should be as clearly marked as circumstances will permit, and the two classes should be kept as far as possible distinct. Perhaps the most important question of the whole will be the choice of a Matron. An ordinary "Nurse" so called, is the last person to be appointed. The Matron should be a thoroughly trained woman a lady, if possible; at any rate a woman of culture and refinement, whose sympathy will gain the confidence of the poor, and whose social superiority will command their respect. The influence of such a woman in such a district may be of incalculable benefit, far exceeding the mere apparent work of the hospital itself.

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

THE annual meeting of the Ancoats Hospital was held on August 11, and was largely attended. Mr. ALEXANDER FORREST (Hon. Secretary) read the sixty-fifth annual report, in which the committee pointed to a year of steady and satisfactory progress. It is four years since the Albert Victor Wing was built, but it was only now that the full resources of the ward accommodation have been made available. The committee has always felt that prudent extension could only be warranted by the measure of support accorded to the institution. This support has been as generously given during the past year as at any period of the Hospital's history. At their last annual meeting the president, Mr. JAMES JARDINE, supplemented his many previous gifts by one of £1,000. This with the endowment of six separate beds—Memorial Name Beds—warranted the committee in opening the last of the wards, the Albert Victor Ward, which had now been for several months fully occupied. This involved an increased Nursing staff and an enlarged annual expenditure; their experience of the past gave the assurance that the means to meet this expenditure would not be withheld. The poor found their way to the hospital in increasing numbers, and testified their gratitude in many ways. The totals were:—Home patients, 2,301; out-patients, 4,383; accident cases, 6,185; in-patients, 1,035. The Convalescent Home at Wilmslow, available for women only, was totally inadequate to the needs of an Hospital with over 100 beds. Similar accommodation for men was absolutely required, and the time had come when this adjunct must be considered. £10,000 had been named

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)