

could well be found than that chosen by the authorities of the institute mentioned at the beginning of my letter—the asylum of Kleefeld. On two sides the spacious grounds of the asylum are enclosed by the forest of the Eilenriede, and two broad fields surround them. No sound of city turmoil disturbs the peace. The air is pure, and the inmates improve so much in general health after being here for a while, that one cannot stifle a regret that the same favourable conditions had not come sooner for some of them, when they might have averted the catastrophe that has brought them here. On the whole, barring the one defect, they present a well-fed, placid, even cheerful appearance. Only among new-comers and adults one catches that terrible look of habitual despair that is sadder than death, and here it struck me that male sufferers were most keenly affected, less able to resign themselves to the inevitable. I do not know what reason there is for this, if my observation should be more than chance. The treatment for inmates of either sex is equally humane.

The new institute for the blind at Kleefeld consists of several large red brick buildings. They have been occupied since last autumn, and are arranged (with generous calculations as to space) to receive at present 100 pupils. A director and a staff of teachers, among whom are masters of various handicrafts, direct the studies, which are oral, musical, and manual. A physician attends to the physical welfare of the establishment.

The mother-institute has been hitherto situated in the town of Hanover, and was founded 1873. Pupils of any denomination and nationality are received and trained. Hanoverians pay 270 marks a year (nearly £12), outsiders 330 to 500 marks. This sum pays for all the advantages they receive. Clothes (which must be after the regulation pattern) and bedding are an extra, which amounts to about £5. Notice of the intention to send a child (or adult) for training must be given three months in advance. I can imagine no better investment of a few pounds than that of employing it by paying for the education of some blind child in this airy, kindly school, and I wish some generous reader would try the experiment of sending some English child here, where the best German in the world is spoken, and music is at home. The result, I feel sure, would justify the trifling expense.

The director of the institute received us courteously in his office, discoursing for a while on the general tendencies of modern education for the blind, here as elsewhere.

"The first thing," he said, "is to train the sense of touch. A blind man's fingers are, so to speak, his eyes, and a blind person unable to use his hands is indeed a pitiable being."

During our tour through the establishment, I had many opportunities of wondering at the marvellous dexterity of the pupils.

To begin with, we visited the class-room for needle-work, where the cheery teacher spread a perfect treasury of delicate crochet-work and knitted lace before us. The variety of design was not less extraordinary than the extreme accuracy of execution. Not a flaw was visible in any piece of work, which was far above the average of ordinary school-room needling, and worthy (some of it) of being kept in a museum. I was glad to learn that it was generally appreciated.

The Emperor of Germany is among the admirers of this wonderful work, and recently bought a large quantity.

A troop of pupils crowded in, rosy-cheeked, from the play-ground, long before I had finished wondering at their work. The children appeared at their ease, and were brisk and alert. In a moment they had found their work, settled in their seats, and set their respective fingers going. Unabated by the presence of strangers, they kept up a gentle undercurrent of conversation—evidently not tabooed in this school-room.

"Oh, Miss ———, do come to me," entreated one little voice.

"And to me," said another.

"And to me."

"Hush," replied the lady. "Presently. Business first. There is a lady here who is going to buy some of our work."

For I had not been able to resist a delicate table-cover of knitted lace, showing me a pattern that reminded me of an old Assyrian design.

An obedient calm was the result of the teacher's remark, but the calm gave way to cheerful vivacity when the director addressed them. He seemed to find the right word and the right joke for each. His words spread sunshine over the little group.

I was allowed a peep at some of the girls' treasured-up hoards—real school-girl treasures of quaint knick-knacks, cakes, and home apples. Each girl has her own cupboard and her own key, and takes great pride in her possessions.

Other class-rooms greatly resemble the general run of Government class-rooms. Even the grooved and embossed maps were no very striking variation on the popular plastic maps of the day. Copies and exercises were pricked with a sharp instrument. Books for study were printed in the same way, which is called the point or Braille-system, after its French inventor. The resulting signs looked terribly confusing, and I said so.

"Not at all," answered the director; "you would probably learn to understand those signs in an hour or two. The new system is far easier than the old." He led the way to the library. When we had entered, he took down, one after another, three large books, each of which showed a progressive stage of printing for the blind.

(To be continued.)

The National Health Society.

53, BERNERS STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.



THE annual Examination for the Silver Medal of the Society is to be held on Monday, November 19th. The Society has lately withdrawn the silver medal it has long given to candidates who have successfully passed the Exam., and has replaced it by one of a new and very different design. The new medal is in the shape of a heart, with the head of Hygieia embossed on the obverse side, and the name

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