



Our Colonial Letter.

FROM THE MELBOURNE CORRESPONDENT OF "THE NURSING RECORD."

March 3rd, 1895.

TIME flies so quickly, I can hardly realise so many months have slipped over since my last letter to you. Many events have not taken place in the time, though we certainly have not been at a standstill in our little Nursing world. After my last letter the next thing to happen was the move of the Trained Nurses' Home from St. Kilda into Melbourne, to a much larger and more convenient house in Exhibition Street. Shortly after this the Committee and Lady Superintendent got up a most successful sale of work for the benefit of the Melbourne Hospital, to show their gratitude for several of the home Nurses having been nursed there, and had received much kindness and attention from Miss Kattin, the Lady Superintendent, and her Nurses, when they had been taken there suffering from diphtheria, contracted at their cases—the Melbourne Hospital being the only one which takes in infectious cases. Had the good Sisters of St. Vincent only opened a hospital for fever and infectious diseases, they would have conferred a boon on the whole community, instead of adding another general one to the already over-taxed people of Melbourne.

Next came Christmas, which we home people never realise, though of course we try to make it as festive as possible for the sick people, the young Nurses thoroughly entering into the spirit of it. At the Alfred Hospital several of the Nurses got up carol singing for Christmas Eve and were very ably assisted by the excellent choir from Dr. Bevan's Church, in Collins Street. Many carols, hymns for Christmas-tide and songs gave great delight in the wards, and to others fortunate enough to hear them, the choir and Nurses adjourning to the dining-room after their pleasant labour of love and partook of their usual Christmas Eve supper. During the octave the choristers from Christ Church, South Yarra, came twice to sing for the patients, as did also the Wesleyan Church choir, but the patients never seemed to get too much carol singing. The Nurses of course make their handsome wards very pretty with floral decorations; but the presents are missing that are so much prized by our English patients. The warm clothing, &c., would be out of place, as we are in midsummer; Christmas cards, letters, and toys for the children take their place, and they have very good cheer given them, and are most content, poor things, with everything done for them.

The Homœopathic Hospital has, I am glad to hear, established the three years' system of training, but—I suppose from bad times—it has reduced its Nursing staff. The Alfred Hospital, I am glad to say, has also made the three years' training an established fact. It

has been thought of for some time in most of the hospitals. Another great improvement effected in this hospital at the commencement of the year was putting the Sisters and Nurses into light washing print dresses—much to the pleasure of the medical and surgical staff as well as their Matron.

The educational course of the Probationers is also altered, and I think for the better. The juniors and seniors are to have separate classes; before, they attended the same.

Just now we are in the height of the typhoid season; all the hospitals are very full of it, though it does not, on the whole, seem to be more prevalent than usual at this time, from the weekly statistics. The doctors are apparently not very busy; *times* are shockingly bad, and everyone does without a doctor as long as possible. As for nursing, it is utterly over-done. The three-year system will slacken the output from the hospitals, which is a good thing. Nearly every girl who is unfit for anything else, thinks, as a last resource, she will become a Nurse. Alas for the poor patients if they were all taken on the staffs!

The Royal British Nurses' Association having instituted a branch in Melbourne, we hope soon in the pages of the RECORD to see the names of many of our principal colonial Matrons and Nurses; I have been surprised at the interest several have expressed in it, as well as their appreciation of the advantages to be gained by Registration, and have often wished that we had a branch in the colonies.

Inventions, Preparations, &c.

HARROD'S Stores, so conveniently situated for Hospitals, Nursing Homes, &c., in Brompton and the district, and in fact most get-at-able from all parts of London, are paying special attention to the requirements of Nurses in all departments. They have a specially dainty show of Caps, Cuffs, Collars and Aprons in most fascinating designs, and at exceedingly moderate prices. The Shoes supplied at these Stores are of excellent quality and shape. In fact, Nurses can obtain a complete outfit at a most moderate cost.

IRISH LINEN.

MESSRS. Walpole, Bros., whose famous Irish linens were mentioned some time since as suitable for Nurses' uniforms, have now opened large showrooms in High Street, Kensington (opposite the Station), where they are showing the most valuable and dainty damasks in endless variety of design and finish. The exquisite work on table cloths, tea cloths, tray cloths, would all be most tempting covers on which to serve meals for invalids. The great advantage of Messrs. Walpole's establishments are that while they supply the best quality of all materials their prices are most reasonable.

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