

taining about twenty beds; airy covered corridors of artistic red brickwork, and woodwork painted a mossy green, connect the blocks, between which are asphalted airing courts surrounded by green lawns, an improvement on grass-covered courts, as they can be kept drier and more cleanly. The institution has been constructed by a lover of light and air, two of Nature's preventatives to disease, and wide, easily opened windows abound; the floors are of polished teak, and the walls painted in lovely shades of pale salmon, and dados of peacock green, with Doulton chimney stoves of the blended shades of the latter colour, or, what I greatly admired, yellow walls, with dados and stoves in golden browns; these beautiful centre stoves are easily kept clean, merely requiring to be kept dusted and occasionally washed. The beds are to have spring and hair mattresses, and linen sheeting, the coverlets being made of a strong shell-patterned linen with a narrow crimson or blue striped edge, according to the classification of the cases in the various wards. To each ward are attached two smaller wards, one to contain one bed, and another two, for the use of serious cases, or of the staff; the ward kitchens are bright and very comfortable, and on each floor is to be found a well-aired fitted linen room, with an ample window and glass door, and any good house-wife knows that linen to keep its colour and usefulness should never be hidden away in dark and airless cupboards. The lavatories and bath rooms are placed in a turret annex and fitted with every possible detail to minimize the nurses' work. The bed pan flush seemed an improvement on other methods I have seen, and not likely to smash so many of these expensive utensils; zinc shelved cupboards were provided for the care of other bedside crockery. Just one finishing touch seemed necessary, the painting or colouring of the numerous lead piping everywhere exposed in the most modern and doubtless hygienic manner. Have we nurses not all had sad experience of the "botching" by unregistered plumbers of hidden pipes? What excuses for bad work, and endless gossip between "pals" in the permanent employ of the hospital engineer!

Dotted about in the Park grounds are the houses—and very charming they appeared—of the medical superintendent, Dr. Birdwood, the junior medical officers, and the steward, and upon entering the domestic block by a private door, one is shown into a lovely private suite of rooms, provided for the matron—parlour, dining room, cosy rosy bed room, kitchen and offices all complete, and made charming and restful by decorations in harmonious tints—and this consideration for the modern matron is indeed a wise policy upon the part of any board. The very great mental and physical strain, entailed upon the cleverest of matrons—if she performs her duties conscientiously—the ever watchful self-control, both of tongue and temper, required to successfully

exercise judicious discipline in her very important department, and the never-ceasing flow of personal sympathy, which she must be prepared to extend towards all her junior officers, if she is to gain their affection and support, makes the daily work of a hospital matron one of very great and exhaustive effort. That she should have a quiet little corner all her own, where she can relax and rest is of the first importance, if the quality of her public work is to be of the best.

The Nursing Home at the Park Hospital is delightfully arranged, each nurse being provided with a separate bedroom, very prettily and daintily furnished, one hundred bedrooms being on a floor. Sitting rooms are arranged for the charge nurses and the assistant nurses, both classes also having their own dining rooms, and a library is being fitted with handsome bookcases, which no doubt will soon be full of delightful books, as the nurses are to have a co-operative library on the lines so successfully inaugurated by Miss Isla Stewart at "Barts."

The domestic staff are equally well provided for, and indeed, the architect and the Metropolitan Asylums Board are heartily to be congratulated upon the efficiency, convenience and comfort of the beautiful new Park Fever Hospital.

Now I should like to see the Board turning its attention to the organization of the nursing in the hospitals under its control. Is the system as efficient and satisfactory as it can be? I think not, and with such splendid clinical material, the nursing in our fever hospitals, and, in consequence, the training of nurses in that important branch of their work, ought to be on a much more liberal basis. At present a high standard of efficiency in general nursing is demanded from those women who are selected for the responsible positions of charge nurse or sister. But the system in vogue of demanding one year's training in assistant nurses is altogether unsatisfactory—no really good training school now trains its probationers for one year—and the consequence of this rule, now enforced by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, in the selection of assistant nurses, often results in women who are unsuited for nursing the sick, insubordinate, or physically unfit, offering themselves as candidates for these posts. No hospital parts with really good nursing material at the end of the first year's term of training, so that it is the unsuitable material that is now very largely being used up by the Metropolitan Asylums Board. This should not be. The refined home provided for nurses in our Fever Hospitals, the magnificent educational material to be found in their wards, all point to the ease with which an improved system of selecting nurses could be inaugurated, and I hope before long that the able medical superintendents and matrons of these institutions will have some suggestions to propose to the Metropolitan Asylums Board. E. G. F.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)