

District Branch and of the Institute somewhat clashed, and it was consequently thought better to take the whole work under one management. There is every reason to believe that this plan will prove beneficial, though it is anticipated that even with these arrangements the work of inspection in the future will need to be largely increased. (2) The second departure during the past year is that the Institute has undertaken the supervision of "village nurses" in connection with County Nursing Associations. These nurses must hold the certificate of the London Obstetrical Society, or other approved midwifery certificates, and have had not less than six months' training. That is to say the utmost general training they can have received is three months. We confess we are sorry that the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute should have given the cachet of its support to women who possess only such a smattering of nursing knowledge. We hope that in the future a different scheme may be adopted.

GRATITUDE.

It is proposed to raise a sum of £30,000 for the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, to enable this institution to acquire the adjoining property belonging to the Hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth. The first £10,000 has to be paid at once, on entering into possession, and the Bishop of London will preside at a dinner to be held on April 28th, at the Hotel Métropole, for the purpose of raising this sum. We nowhere see it suggested that the amount appealed for should take the form of a memorial to the late Dr. West, founder of the Hospital; but, surely, it is only fitting that a memorial should be raised in memory of the founder of this, the first Children's Hospital in the Metropolis, and a more suitable one could scarcely be found, than the proposed addition of a garden, and premises for a Nurses' Home, to the Hospital which owes its existence to the beneficence of this gentleman. Gratitude is a virtue which seems to be indigenous only in generous natures. Is it because there is so little real generosity, that there is so little gratitude in the world? We hope that both these virtues will be called out by the appeal now being made for the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, and that the memory of its founder will be suitably commemorated.

The Menopause.

By BEDFORD FENWICK, M.D.,
Physician to The Hospital for Women, Soho Square.

IT was an ancient belief that the most critical time of human life was during the forty-ninth year—seven times seven being doubly mystical. At any rate, in the case of women that age is usually more or less critical, being as a general rule associated with vascular, nervous, and general constitutional changes which may be attended with danger, and which are almost invariably evidenced by more or less distressing symptoms. In medical parlance, these are due to what is termed the Menopause, or in popular language "the change of life." The results are so protean in their forms, that many have considered that they could not arise from a common cause. In general terms, it may be said, however, that the symptoms can almost invariably be traced to some nerve irritation or disorder, which is most easily explicable by the simple theory that the affected nerve centres are in a condition of "congestion"—that is to say, supplied with too much blood; in other words, more or less overloaded with blood, of which the system has ceased to be relieved periodically. The various symptoms which occur so frequently at this time, therefore seem capable of simple explanation.

Distressing "flushings" are complained of, and are described as sudden and extreme flushing of the face and the conjunctivæ of the eyes, surging sounds through the ears, and a fulness in the brain as though the skull would burst; all these symptoms denoting a more or less sudden dilatation of the blood vessels of the head; the arteries, capillaries, and veins becoming over distended with blood. As a general rule, in a few minutes, the nervous system recovers its controlling influence, and the vessels contract again, forcing the blood forward into other parts and so relieving the local distension. But it is easy to understand that with this sudden pressure on the walls of the blood vessels of the brain, if the latter be anywhere diseased, a rupture may occur at that point, and the blood will escape into the surrounding tissues. So, in a few women—especially those who have suffered from kidney or heart disease, and whose arteries, therefore, have been more or less thickened, and so rendered brittle rather than elastic—the sudden distension, referred to, sometimes causes rupture of one of the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)