

The Humanitarian League has just issued its seventh annual report, which shows a steady increase in membership and activity, the work done during 1897 having largely surpassed that of any previous year.

The Hackney Guardians, at a recent meeting, unanimously resolved: "That this Board is of opinion that increased hospital accommodation for children is much needed in the districts of Hackney, Shoreditch, and Bethnal Green, and that, therefore, the completion of the North-Eastern Hospital for Children, Hackney Road, which has been left unfinished since 1880, should, in the public interest, no longer be delayed." The hospital is appealing for £15,000 for the building operations referred to.

The committee appointed to consider the question of recreation for the officers at the Hampstead Workhouse, have recommended that, amongst other improvements, the guardians should provide a billiard table, easy chairs, and a garden, with lawn-tennis courts, and a summer-house. This is very nice for the staff, but how about the ratepayers?

The hospitals which can issue a one hundred and eighteenth Report are limited in number, but this has been attained by the General Hospital, Birmingham. The Report of the present year is specially noteworthy, inasmuch as it chronicles the removal from the old quarters and the opening of the new hospital. The increased annual cost of maintaining the new building is £5000 and the committee plead for annual subscriptions and donations.

At a meeting of the Blackburn and East Lancashire Infirmary Board of Management on Monday, it was announced that a gentleman, who desired that his name might not be revealed, had sent £11,000 to the endowment fund, and £2000 to the Jubilee new wing of the institution. This is good news for the friends of the Blackburn Infirmary which, owing to the management of its generous chairman, and the efficiency of its nursing arrangements under the supervision of Miss Poole, has attained a high position in the Hospital World.

The Annual Meeting of the Leicester Institution of Trained Nurses was held last week at Leicester, the Bishop of Peterborough presiding. An appeal was made for an additional £80 per annum for the funds of the district nursing branch of the work. We are glad to note that the Committee expressed its intention to go on increasing the private nursing staff, placing upon it only those nurses who had received a three years' training and were thoroughly efficient. Mention was also made of the good work done by Miss McHardy, the lady superintendent. She had proved very successful in her relations with the three classes with whom she had to deal—the committee, the public, and the nurses.

The Committee of the Victoria Institute, Cape Town, have during the past year collected £2604 18s. 2d. In addition to this they have received a grant from the Government of £2500, and have spent £5104 18s. 2d., leaving a balance due to the bank of £53 15s. 9d. It is to be hoped that this sum will soon be collected and the Institute freed from debt.

Professional Review.

THE CARE OF THE SICK.

WE have received a copy of "The Care of the Sick at Home and in the Hospital," by Dr. T. Billroth, Professor of Surgery in Vienna; translated by Mr. J. Bental Endean, and published by Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston, & Co., Limited, St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane, E.C.

The book contains an excellent ideal of a nurse, upon which, in these days, it may not come amiss to comment. "However much innate talent for helping others a man may possess, success can only be secured when he knows *how* to help." There should be "quietness and certainty in working—a powerful means for awakening the confidence of the patient. This quietness and certainty can only be acquired by *practice* in nursing the sick." "The combination and training of various qualities in the same person are more conducive to success than a highly developed single quality. In training for this difficult calling, one of the first requisites is a very strong inclination practically to help the sick. A special talent for sick nursing must exist, if satisfactory results are to be secured. Natural inclination, kindness of heart, intelligence, and quiet disposition must be combined with this talent; its characteristic is a mostly unconscious gift of observation. Love of truth, sense of order, reliable fidelity in her calling, obedience to the medical instructions, pliability under peculiar, sometimes very uncomfortable, circumstances, are indispensable qualifications of a nurse. Reticence, and quiet, silent, unremitting fulfilment of her calling is her duty."

Having dealt at some length with the qualifications desirable in a nurse, the next consideration is the sick room. Some practical instructions are given as to the arrangement of this, the need of ventilation, heating, cooling, lighting, and size. The cleansing of the room and its furniture is also commented on, and much attention is paid to the bed to be occupied by the patient, eight whole pages being devoted to this.

The next chapter deals with the general rules for the care of patients confined to their beds, and after this instructions are given as to the fulfilment of medical orders. Some of these are very valuable, others again appear somewhat needless. For instance, "At times the preparation of an infusion is left to the patient himself, or to those about him; the doctor only notes 'for an infusion.'" Surely the days for such haphazard prescription are over. Nurses who are training will find many useful hints, such as the best methods of applying leeches, mustard plasters, blisters, etc., the temperatures of baths, the administration of packs, the preparation for operations, etc. True, they ought to be taught all these things in their training school, but in these days of undefined nursing education, ward sisters do not *always* consider it part of their duty to systematically teach their probationers. Detailed instruction is given as to bandaging, as well as excellent illustrations which will be welcomed by many. The chapters on the care of fever patients, and upon nursing in epidemics, contain much valuable information. The whole aim of the book seems to be to afford help to nurses, of an eminently practical nature and we commend it to our readers for this reason.

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