

County Hospitals.

By MISS MOLLETT,
Matron of the Royal South Hants and Southampton
Hospital.
(Continued from page 254).

THE DOMESTIC STAFF.

It would be impossible to complete any sketch of the staff of a county hospital without touching upon the domestic staff. If the medical and nursing staff are the flowers, leaves and fruit of hospital administration, the useful kitchen, store-room, laundry, etc., may be compared to the roots from which they draw their nourishment. Nothing is more striking than the universal wail of those who took part, as nurses, in the South African campaign, over the absence of those domestic nursing comforts which are common to all English hospitals, and which contribute so largely to successful ward management.

In some county hospitals there is a steward who relieves the Matron of the actual ordering of and responsibility for provisions, who orders the meat, superintends the porters' work, and so forth. This is not the case in mine, and the Matron does her own catering, of course, bound down by contracts with various tradesmen, entered into by the committee.

Of all domestic branches in hospitals, outside the wards, undeniably the most important is the kitchen, with its head the cook. She has to combine the three essential qualities of economy, efficiency, and cleanliness, must be able to extract the maximum of work out of her subordinates, be as punctual as the sun, please and satisfy everybody, and all in a highly inconvenient kitchen, with insufficient cooking ranges. In some hospitals, I believe, the Assistant Matron takes charge of the kitchen department, but here the Matron gives her orders direct to the cook, and herself sees the ward dinners served in the kitchen.

Certainly next in importance to the cook is the laundry. In our laundry we are undoubtedly fortunate. We have had a really excellent steam laundry built in the grounds within the last few years, and given a good engineer and a good laundry superintendent, that branch works fairly smoothly.

About the household staff, the housemaids, etc., there is little to be said. There are two housemaids for the house surgeons and myself, and three for the Sisters and Nurses, and some outlying portions of the hospital. The extremely scattered condition of our nursing staff makes the supervision and cleaning of their quarters very awkward, cumbersome, and unsatisfactory. The charge of the Nurses' quarters is in the hands of the Assistant Matron.

Every ward has its ward-maid, who is resident and provided, as are all the servants, with uniform. I find the ward-maids, as a rule, greatly attached to their own ward and their own Sister, and a slight rivalry, which is wholesome, exists between them. A really good ward-maid can do a very great deal towards making the work of a ward run smoothly and easily. If the ward kitchen is always clean, the fires bright, the grates done to time, the milk, beef-tea, and dinners brought up punctually, and the corners kept clean, without constant worry on the Sister's part, it adds greatly to her comfort. The Sisters often say, "Change my probationers, if you must, Matron, but leave me my ward-maid." The chief bother with them is, that they will get married.

Our porters, when there is no war on, are generally reserve men—at present they are all civilians. One man is out-patient porter, and spends the day in the Out-patient Department, which is separated from the main building, and only connected by a long winding passage through the garden. Two others are house porters, and we have also a hall boy—who lives in a wooden box—answers the door and telephones, and consumes penny novelettes. The house porters, assisted by the gardener, coal in the morning, carry patients, help with P.M.s, clean the basements and areas, and are generally never done.

(To be concluded.)

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



It has been decided to commemorate the late Queen's reign by establishing a Victoria Female Hospital for Native Women and Children, under the direction of a woman doctor at Aden.

Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York paid a visit to the British Hospital founded by Lady Strangford when at Port Said, and expressed a hope that its size would be increased.

Guy's Hospital has received a grant of £2,000 from the Goldsmiths' Company towards the special requirements of the hospital, which include a building fund of £180,000.

At a recent meeting of the council of the Metropolitan Hospital Saturday Fund it was reported that the receipts from the workshops and business houses from January 9th to March 16th had amounted £2,387 12s. 6d., as compared with £2,189 in the corresponding period of last year. It was decided that the "Special Hospital Saturday" collection for the present year should be made on Saturday, October 12.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)