

Annotations.

A MUNICIPAL NURSING HOME.

Germany, which is essentially a nation which realizes its parental responsibility to the individual, has always been to the fore in the excellence of its methods for the care of the sick and infirm. We have learnt many lessons from the organization of the celebrated Deaconess Institution at Kaiserwerth on the Rhine; we may, if we will, learn another from the Municipal Nursing Home at Düsseldorf. We provide for our poor, who are unable to support themselves, workhouses and infirmaries on the barrack system, Düsseldorf introduces the home atmosphere, the lack of which in our own institutions causes them to be regarded with an aversion which is not always deserved.

The Municipal Nursing Home at Düsseldorf is divided into small wards, thus admitting of classification of the inmates. Moreover, the rooms are tastefully furnished, and the inmates are allowed to bring into the Home their own articles of furniture, and their own clothing, and if they are able, they pay, or help to pay, for their maintenance. Their meals are served to them in their own rooms, and for all practical purposes they might be living in flats, the only place common to all being the chapel. The rooms open on to wide corridors, and beautiful promenades, and though no work is compulsory in their own rooms, those inmates who are able to work are employed in the garden, and on the farm.

This Home is provided by law for single persons who, on account of age, invalidity, or other causes, are unable to support themselves, but old married couples are also received, and are allowed to meet in the garden. Some children are also received. The institution is managed by the Town Council and, under its wise control, there are no rigid rules, and none of the official atmosphere apparently inseparable from British institutions of a similar character. The nursing and administration, including that of the pleasure, vegetable and fruit gardens, and the stockbreeding, have been placed in the hands of Franciscan Sisters, the staff consisting of a Matron and thirty-one Sisters. At least once a fortnight the Committee of Management, which is appointed by the Town Council, visits the Home. The Matron attends the meetings and transacts the necessary business.

The cooking, which also is undertaken by the Sisters, is excellent, the food served being

abundant in quantity and very good in quality. The kindness and humanity conspicuous in the management of the whole institution are an object-lesson in the wisdom of allowing woman's influence full scope where the sick, the aged, and the infirm are concerned.

ANCIENT SANATORIUMS.

There is nothing new under the sun, and Dr. Caton, in his "The Temple and Ritual of Asclepius," shows us that this old saying includes sanatoria. Probably the most magnificent sanatoria of ancient or modern times were the group of edifices which sprang up by degrees around the temple of Æsculapius at Epidaurus. Pure air, charming mountain scenery, elaborate hotels and baths, gymnasiums, a stadium, a library and music hall, and the most beautiful theatre in the Greek world were among the attractions which drew hosts of people to this resort, both invalids and the healthy. The god himself, assisted by his satellites, and his sacred serpents, appeared to the sick in dreams, and worked cures and miracles, which are attested by the official records which have come down to us. Since 1880 new structures have been excavated and discovered, and the book just referred to gives a very good description of this ancient health resort. The dormitories are built to accommodate about four or five hundred patients. The *abaton* is a lofty and airy sleeping chamber, with its southern side an open colonnade. It singularly resembles the shelter balcony now used in the open air treatment of phthisis. No doubt the sick who were treated at Epidaurus were greatly benefited by the rest, pure air, simple diet, sources of mental interest, baths, exercise, massage and friction, and possibly also by the medical treatment employed. So cultured a people as the ancient Greeks must have been proficient in so humane an art as that of medicine.

And, therefore, there can be no cause for surprise if it should be proved that they were well acquainted with hygienic measures in the treatment of disease, which have only been strongly and specially advocated in modern Europe within the last half century. It would however, be a curious commentary upon our boasted advances in the treatment of phthisis if it were found that the methods which are now being inculcated were in vogue amongst the Greeks and Egyptians thousands of years ago.

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