

The Irish Nursing World.

THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES, DONNYBROOK, DUBLIN.

Watch a horde of ragged children at play in a narrow, airless street, note their agile antics and rough and tumble capers, and listen to their strident voices. Collar an urchin if you can, and say to him: "Are you a happy little boy?" and he will probably answer: "Yuss, and for why, no'—ain't I alive-oh?" And with unholy caterwauls he will wriggle from your grasp and make catherine-wheels away down the gutter.

In a sunny meadow a little lass will sit making daisy chains.

"Are you a happy little girl?" you may inquire, patting her golden curls.

"Yis, I be's; see uz roll," and, suiting the action to the word, over and over she goes until her petticoats envelop her curly head, and two little chubby legs are seen kicking in the air.

We may take it, then, that physical freedom is the greatest good known to childhood.

From which one might suppose that human beings who suffer from divers incurable diseases, which leave them halt, maimed, and blind, are to be the most pitied of all human creatures; and yet, as content is a matter of temperament and not of circumstance, it is not so, and one finds a visit to a hospital for incurables by no means a sad experience.

One lovely morning we walked up a shady lane at Donnybrook, in the environs of Dublin, towards the gate through which could be seen the fine Hospital for Incurables, and saw coming to meet us the tall and handsome lady who presides with such happy results over those that dwell therein, including a lively family of dogs, cats, and dicky-birds. Here, in the suburbs of Dublin, surrounded by its own spacious grounds and gardens, is placed a truly royal hospital, where those suffering from incurable diseases are taken in and cared for in great comfort, if needs be for life.

The arrangements of the hospital are very homely and pleasant. Large wards with a centre corridor are divided into cheerful cubicles, each a self-contained *home*, where the occupants are provided with necessary furniture and where all their own Lares and Penates are prettily arranged around them—books, pictures, handiwork—and when in bed, through a window all their own, the patients can see the changeful sky, spring sprout, summer bloom, and autumn fade into temperate winter. Patients not bed-ridden sat around a bright fire, and in fine weather these tenderly cared-for people spend much time out of doors in the beautiful grounds set apart for them.

Active treatment in aid of recovery and in mitigation of their pain is carefully administered. The well-trained staff of nurses are kept busily em-

ployed; thus much relief and many cures have been effected.

As I nodded good-bye to Miss Bradshaw over the garden gate, and her bright face faded from view, I realised once again how all-important is the personality of the woman to whom is entrusted the care of the sick, and what an invaluable factor in her fitness for her special office is the splendid vitality of this lady, who is the warm personal friend of all entrusted to her motherly care.

THE CITY OF DUBLIN NURSING INSTITUTION.

When one corresponds with strangers, one defines them mentally, and, although appearances may not coincide with preconceived ideas, one gets a forcible grasp of character through letters. Before visiting Dublin I had come to know Mrs. Kildare-Treacy, the able Lady Superintendent of the City of Dublin Nursing Institution, through an animated correspondence, as, before placing her valuable assistance at the disposal of the Registration cause, she sent for and studied all our literature, draft Bills, reasons for and against, &c., and discussed the question with those associated with her in her important work in all its bearings. This is the right course to take; one always feels sure that intelligent and unprejudiced persons are bound sooner or later to be convinced of the justice of the principle of State Registration for Trained Nurses if they will only approach the question from an impartial standpoint, desiring always the greatest good of the greatest number, and not from a cramped and personal point of view. As for our Bill, we make no claim that it is as good as it might be. All the more reason for bright brains to criticise it and help to make it better, and this many of the Irish Matrons and nurses have set themselves to do.

The society of private nurses of which Mrs. Treacy is the head has been founded for twenty years, and is incorporated in a business-like way as a company, the directors, amongst whom is Lord Justice Fitz-Gibbon, giving their services in this connection. The institution is located in a charming old house in Upper Baggot Street, with one of those enviable gardens at the back, and here the nursing staff have a most comfortable home between cases, in which I had the pleasure of enjoying real Irish hospitality. I am inclined to think that, owing to the fees obtainable in Ireland being very much less than many people can afford to pay in England, the system on which this institution is worked is the best for the nurses, especially as, in addition to a settled salary, they get a bonus on the profits, and are thus saved all anxiety. The ordinary fee for a private nurse in Dublin is £1 1s. a week for general cases and £1 11s. 6d. for infectious work—in some institutions the charge has recently risen to £1 5s.—so it can easily be realised how precarious must be the living of those working on their own account when

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)