

sides. The stones and wood were given by the owners of the quarries and forests round the famous Château de Caumont La Force.

The peasants, working late at night and early in the morning, did the carting free of charge. In 1848 "La Famille" was ready to receive ninety girls—the first inmates were the orphan from Pisa and the girl from Montaban.

The conditions of admission seemed restrictive, but experience showed that such was not the case. The first difficulty arose from having established a precedent—an orphan with hydrocephalus was admitted.

John Bost was overwhelmed with letters imploring him to receive all sorts and conditions of children, who were indeed orphans but what not else besides. To satisfy this new need he begged the money for "Bethesda," a home for fifty girls, blind, crippled, idiot, or feeble-minded, opened in 1854. Amongst the inmates of "Bethesda" it became noticeable that a great many were epileptics who, for many reasons, could not be left with the others. The need for separate accommodation seemed so pressing that another building was started before the necessary sum was forthcoming. This time the energetic pastor was severely criticised. He called a meeting at which the people supposed he would announce the abandonment of his rash undertaking. Nothing was further from his mind. He simply asked for money. The audience, highly indignant, hissed and hooted. When at last John Bost made himself heard he pleaded his cause so well that the subscription list was closed at the end of the day.

In 1862 "Eben-Hezer" was opened to receive 50 epileptic women and children.

In a similar way, at intervals of four or five years, six other homes were built:—"Siloe," for 80 boys, crippled, blind, or imbecile; "Bethel," for 50 epileptic boys; "La Retraite," an almshouse for old servants and workpeople; "Le Repos," for aged or delicate governesses; "La Miséricorde," for 51 women and children; and "La Compassion," for 33 men and boys—all the most tragic wrecks of suffering humanity imaginable in French "gâteaux." Idiots, imbeciles, and cripples, without intelligence, having lost their best animal instincts, loathsome and repulsive, are sent here from the other homes to wait until released by death from their earthly misery.

"Les Asiles John Bost" are supported, like most of our English hospitals, by voluntary contributions. Any legacies left them have, under the French law, to be invested, and however urgent may be the need for cash, the capital of all charitable institutions remains intact. Each home is managed by a director or directrice, who is responsible to the committee for the management and expenditure, the budget being allotted to each house year by year.

The expenditure for the year 1907 was £9,656, which, divided between 516 pensioners, comes to 1s. 8d. a day—that includes board, lodging, heating, lighting, medical attendance, taxes, and salaries.

The remuneration of the staff is not in any way supposed to be equivalent to the services they render. Only those who wish to take part in the

work from a philanthropic standpoint obtain the different posts to which they are nominally appointed for life.

The work is done almost entirely by the inmates. The girls from "La Famille" learn housework at the "Repos" and in the managers' houses. Each pavilion has a competent cook, but the kitchen helps are idiots and imbeciles.

There is a large vineyard belonging to the Asiles, which is cultivated by the pensioners under the director of an experienced vine dresser.

The kitchen garden, the poultry run, the farm, and the various workshops are in the hands of the inmates. The nursing is done by the wives of the directors and by the matrons under the supervision of the institution doctor. They become specialists in one branch of nursing. As an example, the Matron of "Eben-Hezer," who studies 50 epileptics every day all the year round, has an experience which many nerve specialists might envy, not to mention trained nurses.

The Matron of "Miséricorde" is helped by her daughter, a charming girl of 24, whose only recreation consists in going to tea with the directrice of another home. Mother and daughter never go out together.

A nursing detail may be interesting by the way. Most of the patients of "La Compassion" and "Miséricorde" have incontinence of urine and feces—"gâteaux."

Instead of a mattress they have a box the length of the bed and about 12 inches deep, which is filled with peat, upon which the patient lies. The rest is like an ordinary bed.

In the morning the patients are washed and dressed and sent into the day-room. The bed-making consists of digging out with a broad-pronged garden fork the peat which has been soiled during the night.

The Matron of "Miséricorde" says it is a most excellent method. Peat is a warm bedding, which, when wet, does not chill the patient, and renewing the peat in the way described above prevents all disagreeable smells. When I visited the wards there was certainly not that faint disagreeable odour which one notices in badly-ventilated workhouse wards. One of the patients is a microcephalus, who has just enough instinct to feed herself; otherwise she is a mass of flesh and bone uninfluenced by her surroundings. During the 30 years that she has been there the only break in the monotony of her life was an attack of bronchitis a year ago, when the Matron said, "We feared we were going to lose her." She is about 50 years of age, they suppose, but she never gets older, nor did she seem younger 30 years ago.

The most difficult home to manage is "La Retraite." The Matron's chief occupation is settling amicably the quarrels of her pensioners, who attach a colossal importance to the most trivial remark of a neighbour.

The church is a charming little building designed by John Bost for the needs of the Asiles.

A certain number of seats are reserved for each home. One of the side aisles, where the benches are padded, is reserved for "Eben-Hezer" and

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