

The Hospital World.

THE ROYAL INFIRMARY, EDINBURGH.

The Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, as one of the largest hospitals in the kingdom, is of interest to every nurse who visits the beautiful capital of the North, and so, on a recent visit with a friend, I found my way there, and was fortunate in finding the Lady Superintendent, Miss A. W. Gill, at home, and, most kindly, she asked one of her assistants to show us round the building.

One's first impression is of the fine situation of the Infirmary. The health-giving breezes from over the Forth play freely about it, and at the back pleasant meadows stretch away towards the Children's Hospital, so that on all sides its wards, which are built on the pavilion principle, and with balconies at the end, are encompassed with fresh air.

The spaciousness of the whole place is also a very marked feature, though I learnt from Miss Gill that all the available ground has now been utilised, and it is very difficult to know where a much-needed extension to the Nurses' Home can be placed.

The present Home, which is a fine building, accommodates about 125 nurses, but the nursing staff of the Infirmary is double that number, and so all the probationers sleep in the Home, and some of the nurses occupy the top floors of ward blocks. The Sisters, also, have their own bedrooms, as well as sitting-rooms, near the wards.

The dining-room of the Home is a fine room, where, at separate tables, Sisters, nurses, and probationers dine together, Miss Gill always presiding at one of the dinners each day. Here one noticed a bust and a small full-length statue of Miss Nightingale, the latter always being placed in a prominent position at all prize-giving functions connected with the Nursing School. One notices, also, portraits of Miss Pringle, and of the late Miss Spencer, formerly Lady Superintendents of the Infirmary, and other pictures of interest. There are also lockers for the use of each nurse, in which she can keep a teapot and any special provisions of her own. The nurses' recreation room is a very pleasant one, and each nurse has a bedroom to herself. Through a glass corridor, filled with beautiful plants, one passes out of doors to find that the nursing staff have also their own tennis ground, which is very much appreciated, so that the nurses of the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, are very well provided for. In the basement of one of the blocks is a series of baths—electric, douche, needle, medicinal,

Russian, hot-air, and others—presided over by a specially trained bath attendant, in a most workmanlike costume with low neck and short sleeves. A feature of the hot-air baths, as given here, is that they can be administered to any part of the body—foot, knee, arm, etc.—without subjecting patients who may be weak and ill to a full bath. I do not think that any London hospital, unless it may be University College Hospital, has anything approaching the completeness and comprehensiveness of the bathing department of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

In an institution of the size of this Infirmary the various departments are well defined. There are medical and surgical blocks, as well as one set apart for gynæcological cases, with its own special theatre, and eye, ear and throat, isolation and observation wards, and a dental department, etc. What strikes one, perhaps, most in connection with the wards, in addition to the abundant air and light with which they are flooded, is the liberal amount of space devoted to the annexes. Besides the Sister's rooms, above mentioned, there a comfortably-furnished room for the use of doctors and students, where records, answering to the head-boards of patients in an English hospital are kept, as well as bound volumes of cases. Here, also, are placed specimens of urine for testing, and other appliances for the use of the doctors with the result that the wards present a very neat appearance, and the work of keeping them in order must be minimised. There is also a room where the meals of convalescents are served, again a great gain to the more acutely ill, and a small ward of three beds which can be utilised either for convalescents, or for a case requiring special nursing and quiet, such as a tetanus case.

Another interesting department is the laundry which keeps over thirty women constantly employed, and which comes under the control of the Factory Acts. Here all the washing both for the patients and staff is done, and the work of sorting all the articles and returning them to their rightful owners must alone be no small labour.

The last department which we visited was the mortuary, which has a chapel of its own where the first part of the burial service can be read by the chaplain. Round the walls, which have recently been redecorated, runs the text, "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept," first painted there by Miss Gill when she was Superintendent of the Home. The bodies are disposed of until such time as they are placed in the casket provided by the

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