

## HOSPITAL LIFE AT BLOCKLEY, PHILADELPHIA.

BY MISS LISBETH D. PRICE.

ON account of the great size of Blockley—the many departments, and the varied purposes for which they are used—the life of a Nurse who receives her training there, is in many respects markedly different from that in other Training Schools. Blockley is situated on the banks of the Schuylkill river, in West Philadelphia. The buildings comprise the main Hospital, the Insane Departments, the Children's Asylum, and the Out-Wards, where are the miscellaneous cases of destitution, extreme age, mental weaknesses, &c. The population of Blockley is from three thousand to four thousand, the main Hospital containing from eleven to twelve hundred patients. At the time of this writing, all the departments, with the exception of the Men's Out-Wards, are under the management of the Training School, in which there are upwards of ninety Nurses.

Nearly four years ago the Training School was started by Miss Alice Fisher, whose memory will ever be revered and honoured in Philadelphia, for the incalculable good which has resulted from her noble work in behalf of the poor and sick of that City. To her high aim and noble purpose is due the high standard of excellence required of, and constantly attained to by, all who desire to be known as holders of certificates from the Blockley Training School. The departments in which the Probationer labours during her training are: the Men's and Women's Medical, Surgical, Nervous, Children's Asylum, Insane Departments, and Women's Out-Wards; also the Obstetrical, Gynæcological, and Maternity Wards.

Few Wards in the Hospital contain less than thirty patients. To each floor there is assigned a Head Nurse, and to each Ward a Probationer, whose training usually begins in the Chronic Wards of the Men's and Women's Medical, where the phthisis cases abound; and there she finds an ample field for the exercise of all the patience, gentleness, and endurance she can command. A month of work in the care of these patients will declare, both to the Chief Nurse and to the Probationer herself, whether she is fitted for the work she wishes to undertake. After the first month, the Probationer has entire charge of a Ward—always, of course, under the supervision of the Head Nurse of the floor. Although she is the only Nurse in the Ward, there are usually two Assistants (convalescent patients), one acting as an orderly, and the other assisting with the general diet. The Wards are so large and so populous,

that the Nurse's attention is fully occupied with the care of the special diet, so that she can give no more than a general supervision of the distribution of the ordinary house diet. The Nurses' Home is annexed to the Hospital (and before the days of the Training School formed a part of it), and communicates on each floor with the Wards.

The rising bell for the Nurses rings at six a.m.; breakfast at 6.30; and every Nurse on regular duty is expected to be at her post at seven a.m., when Ward work begins, and is constant and absorbing until twelve noon. Upon the Medical floors, the first duty of the Probationer is taking the temperature of her patients; they are then promptly attended to in the points of breakfast, medicine, and toilet. The temperatures are then recorded upon the charts, as well as the clinical memoranda, the details of treatment, and the temperatures of the past night, which the Day Nurses receive from the reports of the Night Nurses. These charts become the pride of every Nurse, and when the Head Nurse makes her rounds, she examines them, and each Nurse tries to be the one who shall be most highly commended for the neatness and accuracy of them.

Having secured the comfort and cleanliness and general good order of her patients, the Probationer now proceeds to put all the beds in as uniform a position as possible, and the Ward generally in a spotless condition. This duty is very apt to keep her quite busy until after ten o'clock. At 10.30 the Resident Physician makes his morning rounds; after which there are new orders to fill, new medicines to add to the medicine list, some care to be given to the special diet, and possibly a visit from the Attending Physician, or a new patient to be bathed and put to bed. The Nurses' dinner is at twelve; the Nurse in every alternate Ward dines from twelve to 12.30, and the remaining half from 12.30 to one p.m. At one, all again are at their posts, and Ward duty is in full progress. Mid-day medicines are then administered, such trifling disorders as may have resulted from the work of the morning are corrected; thus the Wards are constantly kept in an orderly and comfortable condition.

Ward work occupies everybody fully until 1.30 p.m., when every alternate Nurse is sent off duty for two hours. At 3.30 these return, releasing the remaining half, who stay off duty until 5.30, including the half hour for supper. Those who have had the earlier hours have their supper from 5.30 to six p.m.; after which hard work recommences, consisting of the administration of the evening medicines, the Doctors' evening visit, and of such preparations for the night as are necessary to make every

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