

morsel of it is eatable, that the scalloped oysters are above reproach, and the salad all that one could expect, the lunch becomes ample. Let us compare with this the following dinner menu found in one of the pay-wards of an hospital.

Chicken soup, raw oysters, broiled spring chicken, sweetbreads with toast points, roast beef, broiled fish, stewed tomatoes, stewed corn, rice, mashed potatoes, hominy, peach pie, oranges. This is somewhat elaborate. Let us sample some of these dishes. The chicken soup tastes of the iron kettle in which it was made, and is very suggestive of not clean old bones; two or three spoonfuls are enough. The broiled chicken was not well prepared, there are feathers on the outside, and it is raw and red at the joints; portions of the breast are nibbled, and the rest of what should be a most delicious food is thrown away. The sweetbreads savour of rancid butter, and they meet much the same fate as the chicken; the corn, rice, potatoes and hominy all taste alike, and of the peach pie one is afraid to eat, because it has a flavour of tin, which can only be explained by the supposition that the fruit was allowed to remain some time in an open tin vessel.

Here we have an example of the failure to supply acceptable food to the eater, with every factor present except that of care and understanding in cooking. Varied, wholesome, and valuable food materials fail to fulfil its ultimate use. It is evident that money, energy and time in abundance have been put into the menu, and that they, in a measure, have failed to find an adequate value because of ignorance in the methods of cooking. I would suggest that the list be much simplified, and that some of the force here expended be diverted in the direction of perfecting methods, so that there may be sent to the bedside of every sick patient, food that is at least entirely and absolutely wholesome, and prepared according to methods known to be good.

In this work we must take the initiative; it is more or less our duty to do so. Our charitable institutions, especially hospitals, should be homes in which there is less suggestion of that cold charity which the world practises, and more of the new charity which has already begun to dawn in places,—the charity of the close of the nineteenth century, which as yet is a tiny blossom, but which with hope and joy we look forward to as the only kind which shall characterise the morning of the coming century which is so near—that charity which has a living interest in the welfare of its object, which seeks to restore him to perfect physical and mental health and vigour—to put him upon his feet again, so to speak, that he may have strength and courage to battle with the world and honestly earn his daily bread.

Hospitals should keep high standards of what restoring to health means. Some men, it is true, are wrecked to such an extent that a perfect state of health can never again be possible for them; but for those who are not wrecks, for how many of them is this done?

In one Hospital characterized by the barbarous condition of its cuisine, in which condensed milk is the only milk furnished the sick, and bad bread without butter and boiled cheap tea without milk constitute the evening meal of those able to eat, I was told, on inquiring what food was planned for convalescents, that they never had that class of patients, that as soon as a man could sit up he was sent home, and then my

informer naively added, "But it is a bad plan; they are always coming back to us."

In presenting this subject to you I hope I have not been too radical. Should it seem so, I entreat you to study it for yourselves in every possible light and phase, with the assiduity and methods of a scientist, until point after point are known with exactness; and if this paper arrests the attention of only one among you sufficiently to do this it will not have failed in its object.

## Our Foreign Letter.

### NURSING IN BOMBAY.

WE have received the following letter from a highly esteemed colleague in Bombay, and it will prove of special interest to those Nurses who contemplate going to the far East:—

"I have often intended telling you a little about our Nursing in Bombay since I reached here, but there has never been any lack of work here, and it has been difficult to find time for letters. I was very much surprised, on my arrival, to find such a large Hospital, for it is really most imposing in size and of considerably larger dimensions than one for the same number of beds would be in England. The main block is a new building, and is entirely for men's wards. The women are eventually to be provided for also, when funds are forthcoming, but we fear that may not be for a few years more. Meanwhile, they are accommodated in the old block which used to belong to the men, and there is a children's ward there as well. It is very far inferior in every way to the new building, but we have a great many more men patients in India than women, so I suppose it is only fair to provide for them first. The new large building has 101 beds for men, besides an operating theatre, a dispensary, and out-patients room. In appearance, to English eyes, it would represent more accommodation a good deal, as it seems quite as large as a block for 150 or 200 patients would be at home; but it is built to allow of plenty of shade as well as fresh air, and the very broad verandahs, of course, occupy a great deal of space. The wards are very airy, there is no lack of free ventilation in Bombay, for, except in the Monsoon time, every one seems to live with doors and windows wide open on both sides of the rooms, to allow of a free current of air when there is any. The Hospital is situated in what is called the Fort, and actually stands on old fortifications. There is ample space all round it, and nothing between us and the sea except a few haystacks, and we really have, I think, the best air that is to be had anywhere. There is always a breeze some time in the day which is refreshing. The patients have a beautiful view of the harbour from their wards, and Bombay harbour really is lovely with the islands round and the hills of the mainland beyond. I am never tired of looking at it myself. All round the Hospital is a large compound in which are bungalows for the Resident Medical Officer, Sisters, and Nurses, all new buildings, and also older ones for apothecaries, steward, and infectious wards, all doomed to destruction when Government can afford to build better. There are separate wards in these out-buildings for measles, small-pox, cholera, and also for delirium tremens cases. Scarlet fever is an unheard of disease apparently here, and not provided for. The oldest Nurses of this country have not seen a case. This is the season for infectious complaints, and we have now plenty of measles as well as five cases of small-pox. I am told these epidemics always diminish with the extreme hot weather. Happily, as yet, we have no cholera. There is much less precaution taken here against the spread of

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