

Recently, the suffering of these mothers has aroused the charitable instincts of the people of Sitka, who were resolved that, at least in that one small town, an effort should be made in the interests of humanity, to provide some kind of Maternity Home, in which the native women should receive a modicum of care and comfort. The Alaskan missionaries have done something towards the relief of the sick by establishing a Hospital for children, but no provision had been made for adults or for lying-in women.

So that the recent building which has been put up in the native village and which is known as the St. John's Maternity of Sitka, in memory of the "beloved disciple," who was honoured by being made a protector of the mother of Christ, is quite a new departure and an experiment.

The natives have co-operated in the scheme and readily entered into the work of clearing the ground for the hospital site, carrying the rough lumber of which the building is constructed to the saw-mill, and thence to the seat of building operations cheerfully and gratuitously. It was feared that native ignorance and prejudice would be a serious obstacle in the way of the Hospital's usefulness, and it was, therefore, a great relief on the part of the promoters of the scheme to find the natives—both men and women—ready to give their services. The Hospital was projected in the spring-time, but it was found that so many of the men who were willing to help had to go to their annual fishing or sealing excursions, so that the erection of the building was deferred till the autumn in order that the Hospital should be put up by the natives themselves—thus saving the expense of employing paid labour. Money is somewhat of a scarce commodity in Sitka and "ways and means" have carefully to be considered, and the "furnishing and furbishing" of the Hospital—the doors, the windows, and the blinds, the painting and white-washing, beds and bedding—mount up considerably in the far-off territory where everything has to be transported from such a long distance.

From the English point of view this little Alaskan Maternity Home would appear somewhat simple and perhaps a little comfortless. It is plain and wholesome and sweet and cleanly, but beyond that, there is not much to recommend it from the aesthetic point of view. But the native women who take shelter there, and whose burdens are lightened and pains alleviated have no complaint to make of its lack of ornamentation. They remember with a shuddering contrast the gruesome, mal-odorous huts in which their hours of trial were passed, the dirt, the squalor and the wretchedness, and they acknowledge gratefully what they owe to the promoters of the St. John's Maternity Hospital.

The Nurse in Charge of the Hospital devotes some of her spare time to giving instruction in cooking, sewing and domestic economy to the native women, but as the scheme grows it is hardly likely she will have leisure for this branch of her work. If necessary the patients are allowed to bring their own beds, clothing and food, but as the financial resources of the Hospital improve it is hoped that this will not be necessary. At present the scheme is only in the beginnings, but the appreciation on the part of the natives and the good already accomplished by this little private charity, which is—as charities should be—quite undenominational, augurs well for the extension of the scheme to other parts of "far-off Alaska."

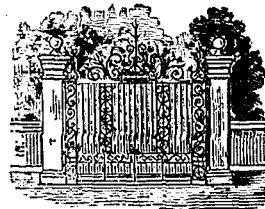
## Inventions, Preparations, &c.

### NURSES' UNIFORMS.

MESSRS. DEBENHAM AND FREEBODY have favoured us with a copy of their illustrated price list of Nurses' uniforms, dresses, cloaks and bonnets, and it is not too much to say that it comprises a most artistic collection of engravings. The cloaks are of many varieties and styles, and very suitable both for winter and summer wear. The bonnets are remarkably neat and useful, and are made in black and in navy blue straw with velvet lining and ribbon velvet bow and strings to match. The reputation of this firm for excellence of manufacture renders it unnecessary to say that the materials are of the best possible quality, yet the prices which are quoted compare very favourably with those which are asked by some other firms. Caps, cuffs, aprons, handkerchiefs, and all kinds of dress materials are shown in large assortment by Messrs. Debenham and Freebody, who have also formed an entire department for Nurses' instruments, travelling bags and other requisites. A visit to the well-known establishment in Wigmore Street, Cavendish Square, would, therefore, well repay any Nurse who is about to obtain an outfit.

## Outside the Gates.

### WOMEN.



SIX women School Inspectors are at work in New York City, and their appointment has been more than justified by the good work they are doing. The "mother-country," England, is singularly behind her young daughter in all questions of women's work and progress. Why have we no women School Inspectors? Our Board and village schools certainly need inspecting by women who would have valuable suggestions to offer on the subject of scrubbing the floors and cleaning the windows of these "founts of learning."

It is almost absurd for the teachers to attempt to inculcate doctrines of tidiness and cleanliness to the children of agricultural labours who see so little of either in their homes and almost less in their schools. Dusty, dirty, littered floors, begrimed desks and benches, fire-irons and fire-grates innocent of polish or black-lead, dirty windows, sanitary conveniences of the most primitive condition, no provision whatever for the washing of hands or faces, a kind of cellar where a few hooks inadequately supply a hanging-place for hats, coats and wraps—all these make up the daily

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