

Lord Knutsford then made a few concluding remarks, in which he said that Mr. Furley's object was to insist on the principles of the Convention of Geneva. It was not, he thought, fully understood that its terms came into force only at the commencement of a war between parties participating in it. When active warfare ceased the Royal Red Cross retired and the treaty ceased. He thought it could not be too strongly urged that the Royal Red Cross was a military and not a civil badge, and that no person not entitled to wear it should use it. He wished to urge the immense importance of organising a Nursing Association in time of peace. He attached the highest importance to the remarks made by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, that such an Association should consist of properly qualified persons. No man or woman was born who could give skilled help at once in time of war. Therefore there was need of training. It seemed admitted by foreign authorities that however good the ability of the medical corps a volunteer reserve was necessary for emergencies. Lord Wolseley also fully admitted it. Hence the importance of arriving at some definite plan.

The meeting then closed after a vote of thanks had been passed to Mr. Furley.



Our Foreign Letter.

ASYLUM LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

(Continued from page 341.)

OUR desire is to cultivate a spirit of friendliness and co-operation; it has such a good effect on these poor afflicted people, to feel that they have a share of the credit of the Asylum, and that each can do his little best to produce a happy life.

The summer picnics are a source of great pleasure to patients and staff, and the open air seems to calm the violence of some of our most troublesome patients.

The classification of patients is a very difficult matter, and one which is quite impossible sometimes, owing to want of room. It is quite an art in Asylum management to put together those patients who will act and re-act favourably on one another. It is quite common to find two lunatics will conceive the most deadly hatred of one another, and constant violence will be the result. Put with others of different temperaments, they often settle down and become quite inoffensive.

Religious services are regularly held and are made as musical as possible.

We have also Services of Song in the wards, which the patients much enjoy. You can judge it is not an easy matter to minister to the religious needs of a community where the creeds range from Dutch Reformed Church to "Roman Catholic," Moham- medan to Wesleyan, and "Heathen" to Church of England! Surely there never was a more curious medley.

Asylum Nursing and attendance under the best of conditions is trying work—I know none more trying. However a Nurse may deserve the gratitude of her patients, it is the penalty of her position that often she receives as her meed the reverse of gratitude, and sometimes is uncharitably judged by the patient's relatives and friends. During the year we had a course of twelve lectures to the staff qualifying for the examinations for the Nursing certificate of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland. The examination paper was sent from England, and a local doctor acted as assessor at the oral examinations. Three candidates passed, and will be awarded certificates. It is intended to repeat the course annually. The training of the staff reacts beneficially all round, and has already proved of service. Each year sees much improvement in the training and status of Asylum attendants, and we are looking forward to a more professional organisation that will make our position more definite and satisfactory. There is a good deal left to be desired in these directions, but I think we are getting on rapidly in theory—the rest will follow as a natural consequence.

The Institute for Imbecile Children is built on the Cottage principle, and consists of two dormitories for 12 beds each separated by a dining room. To the back there is accommodation for a charge attendant and his wife, together with kitchen and out-houses.

The building is most cheerfully situated; several of the children from the Chronic Sick Hospital have been transferred there, where they are educated and trained to useful occupations.

The necessity there is in the Colony for scientific means of training children of weak intellect, of whom, according to the Census, several hundreds exist and are allowed to roam at large, uncared for and uneducated, is very pressing, and this Institute is a grand scheme. It is the only Institution of its kind in the Colony, and this country is to be congratulated on this practical outcome of a noble and philanthropic policy.

The Laundry is an extensive block of buildings consisting of a receiving and issuing room, an ironing room, two wash-houses, one for dirty linen, a work-room, and sleeping accommodation for a laundress, who supervises the building during the night. A good supply of water is laid on; the refuse and waste water is used for trees recently planted in the neighbourhood. The entire building is enclosed within an unclimbable fence, and the drying grounds are ample. Drying closets are still necessary to complete our requirements, for, during the rainy season we are often unable to dry the clothes in the open air for a week at a time, and this, as might be expected, is a great inconvenience to an Asylum.

The Farm in connection with the Asylum not only affords admirable employment to the inmates, but it keeps down expenses in a country where eggs, butter, and milk are so very expensive. We not only "raise" pork and bacon for our own use, but we sell large quantities yearly, which adds considerably to the revenues of the Asylum. We grow also abundance of fruit, and so enable our staff and patients to partake of what would otherwise be a luxury. Altogether we are very progressive, and decidedly on the right path, both as to organisation and in our methods of Nursing and caring for the insane. I will write you further when there are more innovations to narrate. It is nice to feel in touch, if only by means of the pen, with our fellow workers in England.

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