

## Nursing among the Gold-diggers.

THE search for gold is usually accompanied by privations and illness. And it is often a difficult matter to obtain any kind of Nursing—skilled or unskilled—in the new communities which spring up with such marvellous rapidity where the precious metal is found. Illness is common to all new mining townships, varying according to the natural conditions as to sanitation, climate, and water supply. When the sanitation or the water supply is bad, sickness prevails, and the want of proper nursing is particularly felt. On the new gold-fields of West Australia some terrible experiences have been undergone by persons who have been stricken with fever or other illnesses; and, either owing to the remoteness of their situation, or the want of friendly interest in their sufferings amongst those around them, many of these unfortunates have been practically left to die like animals who fall by the roadside.

The Wesleyan Central Mission of Melbourne has organised a corps of Hospital-trained Nurses to carry relief to the suffering gold-diggers. There has been a great rush to the gold-fields of West Australia. The want of sanitation and lack of hygienic precautions has led to the inevitable result of much sickness and serious outbreaks of typhoid fever, which has attacked large numbers of healthy, promising young men. The mortality has been high owing to the utter impossibility of getting skilful Nurses. Now everything will be different. About four months ago the Wesleyan Central Mission sent a trained Hospital Nurse, with a tent, to Woolgangie, the then terminus of the railway line to Coolgardie, where some 1,000 navvies were at work, and she was the means of saving the lives of a number of men. In fact, from the first day the tent was erected it was occupied by typhoid-fever patients. So encouraging were the results achieved, and so inadequate was the provision made to meet the existing needs, that the Mission decided to send out additional Nurses and Hospital-tents, with instructions to follow the miners on to new fields, and provide sick men with proper nursing attendance.

Four certificated Hospital Nurses have already been sent to join the first Nurse, and splendid work is being accomplished in relieving suffering and saving life. There was a pleasant good-bye meeting before the Nurses started, when much that was encouraging was said in praise of the devotion to duty shown by the Nurses, and also by the missionaries who accompanied them to help the spiritual, as the Nursing staff assisted the physical, needs of those who stand in need of it.

## A Few Hints to Sisters.

BY MISS E. J. R. LANDALE.

THE more one reflects on the future of the Nursing profession, the more one realises the important part to be played by the Sister, or Head Nurse. My observation of the good done by some Sisters, and, I am sorry to add, of the failure of many to do all the good they might in their sphere of duty, has made me hope that a few hints out of my experience may prove of value. It is good at times to "see ourselves as others see us," if such vision results in our being freed from "many a fancy and false delusion." If I seem to some rather severe in my judgments, it is only, I beg you to believe, because I have a high ideal of the opportunities for good, and therefore the responsibilities of a Sister's work.

The central idea connected with the part of Sister is the general management of the ward. A great deal is therein included—her authority and manner of exercising it; the teaching and management of Probationers; her attitude towards her patients and their friends; her relation towards Matron and medical men, and her Superiors generally; and also her relation towards those under her direction other than Nurses. On all these points I cannot dwell, but in touching on some of them I do not so much wish to dwell on the practical as on the ethical side of the Sister's work and duty.

Take first the subject of authority. The exercise of authority is beset with danger to many characters. Most women find it very difficult to be wise when they have to rule. I think this arises from a want of precise and clear thinking. The true meaning of authority is not understood. The main idea should be that it is educative, and that there is a true relation existing between the Sister and those who work under her. Wherever this is fully understood all objectionable domineering is at once got rid of, for dominion and authority are incompatible in spirit. Domineering is the attitude of the person who has shut her eyes to the fact that she is not only an individual—a unit—but one of a society. Authority is the attitude of the person who grasps the fact that *relation* is the primary fact of existence, and must never be lost conscious sight of. It is certain that, were this understood and acted upon, many of the Sister's difficulties with those under her would vanish. Take, for example the relation of the ward Sister to her Probationers. The difficulty of her position at once comes in when she is called on to *express* her rule. Strictness in details—severity in verbal reproof, or in manner—all partake of the

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