

The Hospital World.

THE ASYLUMS BOARD HOSPITALS AT TOOTING.

AFTER a journey of exploration, I at last found myself outside the gates of a hospital at Tooting, which I took to be the new Grove Fever Hospital, and, accordingly, enquired for the Matron, who, I was told, was at home. I found myself, however, at the Fountain Hospital, a happy mistake, as I thereby had the pleasure of making acquaintance with Miss Burleigh, the charming Matron, and of seeing something of the institution.

The Fountain and the Grove Hospitals are in the same road, exactly opposite one another. The former is a temporary wooden structure, the latter a permanent hospital. The wooden huts of the Fountain, as those of the North Eastern, have a charm of their own, and the Matron would, I believe, be sorry to change them for a stone structure. One advantage is that, as all the wards are on the ground level, there are no staircases to be traversed. The wards are long, but the lavatories, happily, have been placed half way down them, being divided from them, as is now almost invariably the case, by a short passage having cross ventilation. The cases admitted to this hospital are those of scarlet fever and diphtheria. The wards are connected by corridors which, though covered at the top, are entirely open at the sides, so that the nurses, in passing backwards and forwards, get plenty of fresh air.

At the Grove Hospital I found Miss Wachter, the Superintendent of Nurses from the Small-pox Ships, who, although as busy as is inevitable in opening and organizing a new hospital of over 500 beds, found time to take me round and most courteously showed me everything of interest. Miss Wachter, and Dr. Caiger, the Medical Superintendent from the South Western Hospital, are at present at the Grove Hospital, getting everything into shape, an onerous task requiring special powers of organization.

On entering the hospital, I found my way first to the Matron's quarters. Here are her sitting-room, office, a small waiting-room, and a work-room. In the latter some two dozen employees were busily working sewing machines, under the superintendence of the head of this department. When it is remembered that not only has all the ward and domestic linen to be made up, but that every garment worn by patients during their stay in the hospital is supplied to them, and that all the uniform of the nurses is made on the premises, the work of this department will be realized.

The wards at the Grove are most bright and cheery. They are approached by a little lobby,

in which are entrances to a small "separation ward" of two beds, a kitchen, linen room, and other offices. The floors are of polished wood, and with the central stoves, and the tables gay with flowers, they seem a pleasant place in which to be ill. One thing strikes one, that they are unusually long, and that, as the lavatories are right at the end, there must be a great deal of running backwards and forwards. A noticeable point in the bathrooms is the provision of two baths, a small one for the children, as well as the full-sized one for adults. The cases admitted to this hospital are those of scarlet fever, diphtheria, and enteric fever, so that the nursing experience should be very valuable. There is no doubt that enteric fever will be, in the future, increasingly sent to these special hospitals, and it seems only right that this should be so. As, however, every nurse should be conversant with the nursing of these cases, it will become, in future, increasingly customary for nurses to spend some time in a fever hospital after completing their general training. It is now a rule of the Metropolitan Asylums Board that only three years' certificated nurses are eligible for the position of Charge Nurse, and since its enforcement the standard of nursing in the hospitals under the Board has been greatly raised by this commendable regulation. At present, the first Assistant Nurses must have had at least a year's hospital training, or be promoted from the ranks of those second Assistants who have had two years' training under the Board. The later plan must, we imagine, work better than the former, as nurses with one year's hospital training, free to take up other work, are usually those who have been found either too delicate, or else unsuitable, for work in a general hospital.

Passing from the wards, I visited, under Miss Wachter's kindly guidance, the spick and span kitchen, with its huge ovens heated by gas, and every appliance on an enormous scale. In laundries, every modern improvement makes the enormous work easy, and I noted with interest the huge roller irons, worked by machinery, being fed with sheets, which speedily emerged smoothly ironed.

I have little room to speak of the Home for the nursing staff and the maids, but every arrangement here is of a very high order. Each person has a separate and comfortably furnished bedroom, there are well-appointed dining-rooms, and the sitting-rooms, with polished floors, comfortable rugs, an abundance of arm-chairs, and plentifully supplied with papers and flowers, are charming. The nurse must be hard to please who is not satisfied with her surroundings.

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