

that the downfall of the home means the downfall of the nation. But our love of our own fireside is too deeply rooted for this peril to be a menace to us. The people indeed whom we most compassionate at this season of the year are those who are so unfortunate as to have no home, the destitute poor and the stranger within our gates. It is a matter for deep thankfulness that even these are being generously thought for in hundreds of institutions all over the land—and that they will have a taste of home, if kind hearts and willing hands can provide it. A Happy Home-like Christmas to All.

### Annotations.

#### THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

The further papers relating to the working of the concentration camps in South Africa issued last Saturday in the form of a blue book, prove the valuable national work done by Miss Hobhouse in directing public attention to their condition. In a more liberal age the natural action of the Government would be to invite the woman who has had the courage and the capacity to show where improvement is needed, to return to South Africa and carry on the work so well begun. The persecution of conscientious reformers is at present all too common, we are tired of it; still, failing the recognition of Miss Hobhouse's valuable work, we are glad that a committee of able women has been sent out to deal with the intricate camp question, for the proper management of a settlement of women and children is largely a domestic matter, and as such is indisputably woman's province.

The utility of Mrs. Fawcett's committee is obviously proved by the present blue book. To mention only one instance the committee has urgently recommended that an immediate supply of water tanks for boiling should be sent out, a suggestion which is calculated to have an important influence on the health of the camps if carried into effect. It is also apparent from the correspondence published between Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner that the Colonial Secretary is fully alive to his responsibility with regard to the camps, and that he justly estimates the value of good medical and nursing care. It is probable that the transference of the control of Camps to the Department of the Secretary of State for the Colonies will have a

wholly beneficent effect upon their management, for under the brisk rule of Mr. Chamberlain there is probably more common-sense, and less red tape, than in any other Government Department.

#### "RIGHT AWAY."

The long looked for meeting when the Special Committee appointed by the governors of the National Hospital last July to formulate new rules for the government of the institution, submitted their report, took place last week.

The most important rule from the point of view of the nursing profession was rule 41 which provided that—

"There shall be a secretary, a senior house physician, and a lady superintendent, who shall have the sole control of their respective departments under the board. . . . It shall be their duty to report to the board, and in all cases of difficulty to consult, so far as possible, the chairman, or failing him the vice-chairman, and to act in accordance with his advice."

This journal has emphatically pointed out that the interests involved in the government of a hospital are now so complex that it is a fatal mistake to place any one of the various departments—secretarial, medical, nursing and domestic—in subjection the one to the other. Each department needs an official head, held responsible for its efficiency, to the Governing Body which must conscientiously maintain the balance of power. The prosperity of the National Hospital was imperilled in the past because this principle was insufficiently understood, and we heartily congratulate the governors upon its adoption. We are glad that Mr. Melville Green at once squashed Sir Henry Burdett's mischievous amendment which placed this great principle in jeopardy.

It is certain that the scientific interests of a hospital, demand the entire time of its resident medical officers, who should, moreover, be keen for advancement in their profession, after a period of residence in a hospital. The type of man who has no ambitions beyond securing a comfortable berth, and settling down to a permanent post, in which his time is occupied in looking after frocks and frills, is not the man who will render most able assistance to the visiting medical staff. This fact, Dr. Bastian seems to have appreciated.

The governors of the National Hospital, are to be congratulated upon placing its management on a just and modern basis, a basis indeed, which is the only workable one if the best results are to be achieved.

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