

The King and Queen at the Herbert Hospital.

Last Monday was a memorable day in the annals of the Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, for it ushered in a new era in Army Nursing methods, methods in which the King and Queen proved their keen personal interest by visiting the hospital to open the new nursing quarters, and to inspect the wards where some 150 patients suffering from wounds or diseases contracted in South Africa are still being treated.

The hospital was bright and clean as a new pin, and was besides elaborately decorated in honour of the Royal visit. Waiting to receive their Majesties were the Commander-in-Chief and Countess Roberts, the Director-General, Sir William Taylor, Lieutenant-General Sir T. Kelly-Kenny, and other of the Headquarters Staff, as well as Colonel H. T. S. Yates, commanding the garrison at Woolwich. Foremost among the group was Miss Sidney Browne, Matron-in-Chief, in full-dress uniform, wearing medals she had won in Egypt and South Africa, including the Egyptian medal and clasp, the Khedive's star, and the Royal Red Cross. Near by was the newly-appointed Principal Matron, Miss Becher, and there were also present Miss Monk, of King's, and Miss Cave, of the Westminster Hospital, members of the Army Nursing Board. Their Majesties were welcomed with a Royal salute, the National Anthem being played as they drove in.

As the principal object of the visit was to open the new nursing quarters, the Queen proceeded at once to the house, where the Matron, Miss Beatrice Jones, and the Senior Medical Officer, Colonel Whitehead, were in waiting. Drawn up in the dining-room were the whole nursing staff, comprising Sisters Magill, Briscoe, Potter, Cheetham, Laming, Lerner, and Lyall, and Staff Nurses Watson, Wilson, Kendal, Hughes, Hallett, Keene, Ridout, Moor, Humphreys, Bickerdyke, Pedlar, Settle, and Fitzgerald. Her Majesty presented to each member of the staff the badge of the new Service, which she has herself designed. In the centre is the Danish Cross, inscribed with the Queen's cypher "A." The border bears the words "Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Service," and surmounting the whole is the Imperial Crown. The Matron's badges were in gold, the Sisters' in silver, and the Staff Nurses' in bronze. The badge will be suspended by a special ribbon, but as this was not ready the Queen honoured these first members of the Service to receive it by presenting it upon a ribbon which only the ladies of her own household can wear.

This ceremony over, Her Majesty made a thorough inspection of the house. The alterations and adaptations have been carried out entirely in the last month under Colonel H. M. Sinclair, Commanding

Royal Engineer at Woolwich. Both the King and Queen expressed their warm commendation of the way in which the work had been done.

The dining-rooms are artistically decorated in a warm shade of rose; the Matron's sitting-room, on the first floor, is a charming combination of blue and pink. The Sisters have their sitting-room and bedrooms on the same floor, and on the floor above is a pleasant sitting-room for the Staff Nurses and a bedroom for each.

A complete set of the various uniforms to be worn by the new Nursing Service, and which were displayed on dummies, were inspected by Her Majesty. The grey and red uniform of the Army nurse is well known. The ribbon on the white sailor hat which may be worn on foreign service is red, bordered with grey.

On the parade ground outside the hospital were assembled members of the Royal Army Medical Corps, to whom the King presented South African medals. Major Braddell, R.A.M.C., first came forward for the medals of Queen Victoria and King Edward, and twenty-seven orderlies of the R.A.M.C. also received their medals from the King. Tea was then served in the Sisters' sitting-room to the King and Queen, who again expressed their pleasure at all they had seen. When the Royal carriage at length drove off there was a scene of boundless enthusiasm, the spectators who had assembled warmly demonstrating their pleasure at the visit to Woolwich of their Sovereign and his ever-popular Consort.

THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS.

A comprehensive scheme of reorganisation, aiming at a differentiation of the duties of non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Army Medical Corps, has been under consideration at the War Office.

It has been decided to recommend that the non-commissioned officers and men of the corps should be divided into four distinct sections:—

1. Nursing Section.
2. Cooking Section.
3. Clerical Section.
4. General Duty Section.

Special attention has been paid to the training of men for the Nursing Section, who will in future be employed in nursing duties only. A very complete scheme for nursing instruction is being drawn up, and every effort is being made to develop this section.

Her Majesty has signified her wish that the most proficient and best-conducted male nurses should be admitted to her Nursing Service, and a scheme for carrying out this object, including extra remuneration to such selected non-commissioned officers and men, and the granting of a special badge to denote the distinction that has been conferred upon them, is under consideration.

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