Notes on Some Paris Hospitals.

I had a vague suspicion that there would be a certain amount of difficulty in getting permission to visit the Paris hospitals. Having no idea how to set about it, I began, as one usually does, with inquiries of my friend, who has resided in Paris for some years. She asked her friends, and a French student advised writing to the Director of the hospital I wished to visit, and suggested the Boucicaut as being the newest, or one of the newest, and most up-to-date. This advice was acted upon, and almost by return of post came the requisite permission. So one afternoon off we started. On arriving we showed our permission to visit the hospital to the concierge, and were directed to the office of the Director; arrived there, an infirmier, or, as we should call him, a porter, was requested to show us round. He inquired, "What did we particularly wish to see, and from what point of view—building or administration?" We tried to explain it was the latter, but chiefly in regard to the nurses.

This view was of little or no interest to him, but he was very proud of the up-to-date arrangement of the buildings and appliances.

The hospital was built through the generosity of Madame Boucicaut, the originator of the Bon Marché in Paris, who left some millions of francs for this purpose. It is built in pavilions, a separate pavilion for medical, surgical, septic, midwifery, and phthisical cases. Each pavilion is separated by a good open space, made refreshing to the eyes by grass and trees, all being connected by a subway, well lighted and ventilated, which not only affords a warm dry passage from block to block for those connected with the building, but also contains the electric-light wires and hot-air pipes, so that they may the more easily be mended should they go wrong, also a track of rails upon which trollies run to carry food and linen to and from the different blocks.

Each pavilion is built well above the ground, so that we entered by a short flight of steps. On entering we saw a series of small rooms on either side of a central passage, terminating in one large ward containing about sixteen or eighteen beds. The rooms at the end are used as theatre (if a surgical block), office for the doctor, kitchen, bath-room, &c. Then on either side small wards containing one, two, or three beds, and finally the large ward. Opening out of the large ward at the far end is a huge conservatory, the width and height of the ward itself, filled with palms and ferns.

The rooms and wards were absolutely devoid of decoration of any kind, and a few flowers which we offered were received with very evident astonishment, but, oddly enough, we saw a cat and a dog.

The whole building is heated by steam, and ventilated by the windows, which are opened high up well above the patients' heads, when the weather is not too cold; in that case fresh air is admitted through the conservatory, and warmed there before entering the ward itself. The French, as a nation, object very strongly to open windows. The hospital was built to contain 280 beds, but with extra beds will accommodate about 350.

The staff numbers between eighty and ninety, but whether this includes porters, cooks, and all concerned we could not ascertain.

In all the wards except the midwifery ward religious sisters still act as surveillantes or superintendents, and under them are the infirmières or female nurses, generally two in number; this title includes all the women working in the hospital, as infirmier includes all the men except doctors, students and head cook.

We inquired how one entered the hospital in order to become a nurse, and were told that "All the infirmières there were diplômée." This sounded rather incredible, as it did not correspond with what I had heard either at home or in France.

We inquired "Where and how did they get the diploma?" and were told in the larger hospitals, like La Salpêtrière, which I mentally marked for a visit, the result of which shall follow.

It would be well to give here some general information to save repetition later on. All the Paris hospitals are under municipal control, and are administered by the department of the Assistance Publique. Each one, however, has a Director, who is responsible to the Director-in-Chief for his institution.

The infirmières, therefore, in all the hospitals wear the same uniform, marked with the name of the hospital in which they work, and with a number, which I imagine is the number of the individual. This uniform consists of a black alpaca dress, large white bibless apron, white muslin fichu, white sleeves and cap; this is small and round, with a narrow goffered frill, and tacked on the front at the middle is a long, narrow piece of the same material, the ends of which are brought over to the centre and form a stand-up bow across the front of the head; no strings are worn with these caps. This is full-dress uniform, and is worn by all those doing office work, or anything not connected with the sick, as well as by those in charge; these, however, wear different caps according to their positions. When working, the infirmières wear a blue and white striped cotton dress, and in the surgical wards wear brown holland overalls. The caps, as I have already remarked, differ according to the grade of the wearer. The first step up brings a black ribbon, which is worn round the cap with long streamers behind, instead of the white bow. This indicates a "suppliante" of the second class. The next step brings a black ribbon bow in addition to the ribbon; this is the badge of a "suppliante" of the first class. The next step is "sous surveillante,"

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