

The Hospital World.

THE BAGTHORPE INFIRMARY, NOTTINGHAM.

The new Poor Law Infirmery at Bagthorpe, near Nottingham, of which the municipality is justly proud, is one of the finest State hospitals in the world. Surrounded by seventy acres of open undulating land, three miles away from the centre of the city, it is composed of a colony of buildings constructed to meet the needs of the parish poor and infirm, nearly 600 beds for the sick, and official residences for the medical and nursing staffs.

Pass in through the lodge gates. To the right lies the workhouse proper, and then take quite a long meandering drive, and you come to the central door of the group of blocks, which contain the wards; to the right of the Infirmery is the sanatorium, providing accommodation for the open-air treatment of thirty cases of phthisis; to the left a most complete block for the cure of infectious diseases. At some little distance, opposite the front door, is the pretty red brick building of the Nurses' Home.

One looks around—truly a splendid institution; but one regrets that we should have with us so many penniless people, so many solitary sick ones, that there should be so much sorrow, such great despair, that to house it all we must erect all over our little land these wonderful and palatial institutions. What a happy, splendid land it would become if year by year we could safely decrease accommodation for indigence and disease, instead of being compelled to increase it—but that is another story.

Once inside the Bagthorpe Infirmery, brightly welcomed by Miss Dwight, nothing remains but to cast aside regrets and set oneself to enjoy inspection of the beautiful interior, and realise all the wonderful sympathy with sad humanity which the creation of such a hospital portends. The spirit which apparently has animated those responsible for Nottingham's sick poor shines forth at every turn. "Nothing is too good for our poorest and saddest. We, the more fortunate, will provide of the best, for these who have fallen by the way."

From the centre of the building a long corridor, cheerfully paved with fine red tiles, runs to right and left; off this corridor branch on either side blocks containing spacious domestic offices and splendid wards, fine inlaid polished floors, walls painted in either pale green, buff, terra-cotta, or French grey; and the fine Doulton's stoves are of the same colours, also the screens. The bedding is snowy white. At the end of one block is situated a day room, where round splendid fires (it is well the collieries are not far distant) the convalescent patients are taking their ease. At the end of the opposite ward a balcony is arranged. One Sister is in charge of the whole floor, and, I gathered, had some sixty beds under her superintendence, with staff nurses and probationers to help her, as a

flourishing training-school is naturally attached to the infirmery.

I was much pleased with the simplicity and spaciousness of the wards. Everything was there for use and comfort, but no unnecessary fallals, not too much furniture, nor too many brasses and utensils, nor a superabundance of plants and flowers; a sufficiency of all things, yet supreme neatness. This is, in my opinion, the acme of good ward management. I have a great objection to seeing a littered sick room, and the same holds good in a ward. An impression of space, form, and light should be borne in on one upon entering a ward, not a besmudged *coup d'œil*.

Quite the most charming place at Bagthorpe is the maternity ward; such spotless beds for mother, such cunning little white swing cots for the babes, where they are placed between meals. It is a happy augury for the future that they should be born into such sweet surroundings, handicapped, as the majority of them are, by inhuman laws as to birth-rights. Perhaps, when they have realised the cruel injustice of illegitimacy, they may be of those who in a future generation will rise up and demand that guilt alone shall be branded and innocence shall go free.

In the children's ward a fine chorus was humming. Here were to be found the tinies, and those too young to be cared for with adults. Quite a colony of youngsters were seated on a rug, amusing one another with pranks and toys. Sad little pale faces peeped from the cots. But how much better off were these sick ones here in this bright, warm ward than in their unspeakable homes. Not until a good Government sweeps away the insanitary hovel shall we leave off breeding the halt, the maimed, and the blind.

As we went from ward to ward perfect order and cleanliness were apparent. The standard of order was evidently of the highest, not only in the wards, but in nooks and corners, passages and corridors. All were swept and garnished, no litter or lumber which one so often spies in corners, and refreshing currents of air met one at every turn.

The Nurses' Home, a prettily-situated detached building, contains a large general sitting-room cosily furnished with an abundance of easy chairs and couches, all tastefully upholstered in artistic fabrics, with curtains, screens, and window seats to harmonise, a piano in the place of honour. In addition, there is a library, Sisters' sitting-room, and visitors' room; a suite of rooms for the use of the Home Sister, all similarly furnished. Each nurse has a separate bedroom, furnished with spring bedstead, walnut wardrobe, and combination dressing-chest and washstand. There is also a spacious sick room, placed in a quiet corner of the Home, and bath and lavatory accommodation on each landing. At the back of the Home are extensive tennis courts and croquet lawns, sheltered on three sides by sloping banks.

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