

of a district nurse's work, her power for good as a health missionary. The ignorance of the poor in matters of health and sanitation, are, Lady Hermione said, appalling, and their ideas, or rather want of ideas on the feeding of infants, and on the spread of infection, are productive of the most disastrous results. The district nurse has many opportunities of advocating preventive measures, and such work is most successful. For instance, it was, she said, not uncommon to find healthy members of a family sleeping in the same bed as a patient far advanced in consumption. The nurse, through her position, was better able than anyone else to instruct and warn. Prevention was better than cure, and workhouses, sanatoria, and hospitals were expensive luxuries. If the ratepayers only realised the splendid agency they had to hand for the prevention not only of disease, but also of poor health and physical deterioration, they would contribute liberally to the support of district nurses.

In reference to the outbreak of plague in Zanzibar a correspondent says:—"One of the most encouraging features of the outbreak has been the numerous offers of help. Among the first to volunteer were the nurses of the Universities' Mission. Miss Brewerton has gone to the Plague Hospital on Prison Island, where the patients are, and is in charge of the nursing arrangements there. So the public may rest assured that the patients are being cared for in the best possible manner." This is the second time that Miss Brewerton (who is a member of the Matrons' Council) has rendered signal public service in Zanzibar. At the time of the bombardment in 1896, she was the first woman to land from the men of war to which all Europeans were ordered, and her work in connection with the wounded was, it was stated at the time, so signal as to demand special recognition. Miss Sharpe, to whose thrilling escape from Masasi we recently referred, is acting as Matron of the English Hospital during Miss Brewerton's absence from Zanzibar.

### Presentation to Miss Peter.

We are officially informed that the presentation to Miss Peter will be made at the Joint Conference of the Associations of "Queen's" Superintendents in the Northern and Southern Counties in London, on November 29th. Miss Lamont, from Ireland, and Miss Cowper, from Scotland, are both expected to be present, as well as the majority of the Superintendents. The presentation, which will take the form of a cheque, will be made by the Superintendent present who has been longest in the service of the Institute. An address will also be presented bearing the names of 900 subscribing nurses.

### The Hospital World.

#### THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, BIRMINGHAM.

Birmingham is a very go ahead city, full of incarnate municipal conscience, and one feels this briskness in the air as soon as one steps up Corporation Street. It is meet, therefore, that the care of its sick should be well done. I remember in the report of the opening of the fine new General Hospital in 1897—a model in much that a general hospital should be, it was announced that the building, which cost some £150,000, was opened free of debt, an announcement in which the community generally had the right to feel pride. Anyway, a visit to this fine institution had long been my desire, and through the courtesy of Miss M. E. Jones, the Matron, and Mr. Howard Collins, the House Governor, it was gratified thoroughly during a recent visit to the metropolis of the Midlands.

The Birmingham General Hospital is situated well in the centre of the town, and is an exceedingly handsome building. Built of red bricks relieved by others of a gorgeous plum colour, faced with terra-cotta with roughened surface, and roofed with green slate tiles from the Buttermere quarries, the institution presents a magnificent yet comfortable appearance. The hospital is built on the pavilion plan, each ward containing twenty-four beds, with smaller wards attached, connected by a long corridor, and is wonderfully light and bright within, tiled walls and polished floors playing their useful and decorative part, and great pleasure is evidently taken in keeping the wards and corridors in a spotless condition.

The walls of the large operating theatre and of the two smaller operating rooms are lined throughout with marble and alabaster, specially treated to be non-absorbent. The ceilings are of waterproof cement on expanded steel lathing, and the floors, like all the corridors, are of marble mosaic.

Three departments co-ordinating for the general comfort, which are specially notable at the Birmingham "General," are the system of ventilation, which demonstrates the Plenum method, the Domestic Department, and the organisation of the Out-patient Department.

#### THE PLENUM SYSTEM OF VENTILATION.

The hospital has now been in working order for eight years, and in all that time the wards, theatres, and kitchens have been kept thoroughly aired, sweet, and hygienic, although the majority of the windows are never opened, and the system by which this is done is evidently thoroughly approved by the House Governor. He was good enough to conduct me to the depths below, and explain the whole working of the Plenum system of ventilation.

The system consists of washing, warming, and changing the air of each ward and room independently (under absolute control). The minimum

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