

## Our Foreign Letter.

### THE BRITISH COTTAGE HOSPITAL AT MUSTAPHA SUPERIEUR, ALGIERS.



Some years ago Algiers ranked high in England amongst Mediterranean health resorts, but of late the doctors have sent their pa-

tients farther afield, to Egypt, the West Indies, India—in fact, to the uttermost parts of the earth.

But there is still a considerable English colony in Algiers, who, with one consent, have chosen the beautiful suburb of Mustapha as their winter residence. Six or seven hotels are in this quarter of Algiers, most of them possessing beautiful gardens, and standing high on the slope of the hill commanding fine views of the bay and the distant mountains. Algiers recalls to the mind sometimes Riviera towns, such as Cannes, Mentone, Bordighera, sometimes the Bay of Naples, though always retaining its own peculiar seal, the impress of the Orient. Here in the month of May one revels in the fresh green of the grass, the young corn, and the deciduous trees, contrasting with the soberer colouring of pines, olives, and ilexes, whilst the air is filled with the perfume of shrubs and flowers. And such a wealth of flowers! Cascades of roses tumbling over pergolas or any handy tree, cinerarias and geraniums blazing in the garden borders, the delicate perfume of the heliotrope floating up to the balcony and wide open windows.

All these are a joy indeed to the weary traveller from sea or desert. And it is in surroundings such as these that the British Cottage Hospital stands. The house is an old Moorish villa, which was occupied for some years by an English doctor. The building well adapts itself to a hospital, with its verandahs and balconies and ancient tiled walls and floors. There are no wards, properly speaking, as each patient has a separate room. The hospital makes up eleven beds, and the nursing staff comprises the Matron and four nurses. There is no resident doctor.

The scale of payment begins at the rate of four francs per day for British Seamen, this includes everything except the patient's laundry bill, and any surgical appliances which may be required.

Masters and officers of ships pay five francs per day. Next on the scale come "British employers," who pay six francs a day and the extras for this class of patient are the doctor's and chemist's bills, and *night nursing if required*. For this latter item three francs per night is the charge.

"Private patients" pay twelve francs fifty-centimes per day, and their "extras" are as follows: Laundry, wine and spirits, doctor's and chemist's bills, and *three francs per day for nursing, and three francs per night if required*.

For infectious cases the charges are much higher. There is an isolation ward at the bottom of the garden, which has not been required this season.

The italics in the above list of payments are my own. Surely it is strange in a hospital to charge extra for nursing, either by day or night? The charge for private patients seems to me too high altogether. The staff nurses from the hospital are sent out to private cases under certain conditions.

A side issue of these tiny English hospitals in Mediterranean health resorts is that they enable many a first rate nurse, who by reason of impaired health cannot continue her work in England, to take this light work in a good climate, and thereby regain health and strength, while at the same time she earns her livelihood.

This little hospital was cheered and inspirited last year by a visit from King Edward and Queen Alexandra during their short stay at Algiers.

The affairs of the hospital are managed by a committee of English residents. The charming nurse, who, in the absence of the Matron, did the honours of the hospital for me, said that this was her first experience and first winter of nursing out of England. She was trained at the London Hospital. What a change from that huge house of sickness in the greatest metropolis of the world to this tiny little flower surrounded hostel for sick travellers by land and sea. But she was so delighted with her experience that she did not wish to return to work in England.

At the time of my visit there were only two patients in the hospital, both sailors. One of these was chief officer on board a mail steamer who fell thirty feet into a boat, and broke his leg. The nurse showed me the photograph of the fracture taken by the Röntgen rays. Both fibula and tibia were broken though fortunately it was only a simple fracture. The patient had been in bed seven weeks. He looked very cheerful, his room was a bower of roses, and he was playing Patience!

RAY MERTON.

## The Up-Country Nursing Association.

The Eleventh Annual Report of the Up-Country Nursing Association for Europeans in India, of which Her Majesty the Queen is Patron, shows that admirable work is being done by the nurses of this much needed Association. Unfortunately the nurses number but twelve, a mere drop in the ocean when the area in which they work is considered. The Association's average annual income from subscriptions and donations for the last five years amounted to only £115, a sum barely sufficient to meet the expense of sending two nurses a year to India.

The Association surely deserves better support than it is at present receiving. Only those who have lived in tropical countries realise how sorely the services of nurses are at times needed, and how valuable lives are lost for the lack of them. The Hon. Treasurer, Colonel S. W. S. S. Bissett, R.E., K.C.I.E., 46, Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, will gladly receive subscriptions.

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