

writing from Ethelbert, Manitoba, has some interesting notes on the habits and customs of Galicians. She writes:—

"I wish you could see some of the medical and surgical cases amongst the Galicians who surround us. About the first thing noticeable about them is the extreme filth of their persons, and their homes, which are unsanitary in every respect, so that it is quite impossible for the sick to have anything like care in their own homes, which in the large majority of cases are simply hovels. We are hoping for a small hospital here that such cases may be properly attended to.

"Sometimes patients are brought to us for surgical treatment, but even then it is far from satisfactory, as the bandages and dressings are often removed when they reach home to see how it looks, and if the friends think it is not properly done they often remove the dressing altogether, substituting some concoction of their own. In one case of a fractured fibula, which we walked out about two miles late one dark night to set, Mr. Monro found on three successive visits that the bandages had been removed, and once they were rubbing over the fracture with buttermilk! Of course the union was crooked, but not so bad as we expected.

"Often when medicine is given, with instructions almost forcibly impressed upon them, they prefer to take it altogether differently, or if the first dose does not cure it is pronounced no good, and thrown away. In many cases upon receiving medicine here they meet friends who tell them all sorts of yarns and frighten them from taking it. It is most difficult to reason with them. They invariably want 'something to rub on' over any spot affected, no matter what the cause of trouble, and cannot see why medicine taken internally can cure that particularly spot.

"The obstetrical work is strange indeed. If labour continues more than two or three hours they think it a great calamity, as the Galician women, being such a sturdy people, have usually a very easy time.

"Few of their homes have more than one room, no sign of a curtain or screen of any sort; the entire family eat, sleep and live in this one room. There is no privacy whatever in the poorer families.

"A newly-born infant is wrapped in old clothes and left to soak in a bath tub made by hollowing out a section of a tree. Galicians have a prevailing superstition that the top of a child's head should never be washed lest the child die, or at least be unhealthy. Consequently nearly every baby has a thick patch of dirt on the head which remains there for months, or until it suppurates off. The older people are very determined to have their way in these things, and our only hope of teaching better ways is in the young people. Many remark upon our babies being so healthy in spite of the daily washing. As a rule, Galicians have very little acquaintance with soap and water, and when Mr. Monro calls for it they think he is asking a most unnecessary thing.

"When a tooth is extracted many look to see if the 'worm' is out. They think the nerve is a living worm which has got in and is doing all the damage."

## The Hospital World.

### THE SOMERSET HOSPITAL, CAPE TOWN.

#### THE NEW NURSES' HOME.

In brilliant weather on December 3rd, his Excellency the Governor, Sir W. F. Hely-Hutchinson, G.C.M.G., opened the Victoria Nurses' House, the new home for the nurses at the Somerset Hospital, Cape Town, which has been built at a cost of £17,000. It will be remembered that the foundation stone of the House, in memory of Queen Victoria, was laid by the Prince and Princess of Wales five years ago, and now the nursing Staff have at last a home worthy of the hospital. It is built in the old Dutch homestead fashion, and the fittings and decorations have been selected to harmonise with the style of architecture. The House forms three sides of a quadrangle, the building is red plastered and white tiled, and the stoeps, characteristic of the country, are supported on pillars and roofed by the upper storey. It contains accommodation for sixty nurses and six servants.

The opening ceremony took place on the front stoep, where were assembled, to receive His Excellency, the Chairman, Mr. G. Smart, and members of the Hospital Board, Dr. Moffat, the Resident Surgeon, Miss Child, the Matron, and Mr. McGrath, Secretary. All the nurses who could be spared from the wards were also present.

In declaring the House open, His Excellency said that he regarded it as a great privilege and honour to have been asked to open the building, and it would be a very great pleasure to him to report to the Prince of Wales that the work which His Royal Highness began five years ago had now been successfully completed, that this long-desired building which was of such vital importance to the success and to the efficiency of the Somerset Hospital was at last a reality, and that it had met, if they could judge from the applause they had just heard, with the approval of the ladies who were to live in it.

At the conclusion of the ceremony his Excellency distributed prizes and certificates gained at the last hospital examinations held at the Somerset Hospital to the nurses. The following was the prize-list:—Third-year nurses: Nurse Lizamore, first prize, silver medal, and Arderne Prize; Nurse Stegmann, second, special prize given by Dr. Johnstone. Second Year: Nurse King, first prize, given by Mr. Beard; Nurse Ingram, special prize, given by Dr. Hugh Smith. First Year: Nurse Warren, prize given by Dr. Bosenberg.

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