

Our Foreign Letter.

LIFE ON THE GOLD COAST.

Bad as the reputation of the Gold Coast climate is, life out here can be made very happy and pleasant for the Nursing Sister. Both at Accra and Sekondi the Sisters' quarters consist of large roomy bungalows, with cool, wide balconies which can be made delightfully comfortable. The compounds are, after the rainy season, generally bright with tropical plants and flowers, and gardening, when there is sufficient water, is a pleasant pastime. Zinnias, sunflowers, balsams, cannas, etc., do remarkably well in the open, whilst the balconies can be adorned with the ferns and palms of the country. The hospitals have beautiful airy wards, those for European patients being quite apart from the native. As regards the nursing of fever cases amongst the Europeans there is little variety in the treatment. Ordinary malarial cases are given an aperient on admission,

followed by quinine when the bowels act, generally grs. x. twice a day and hot drinks to induce sweating during the course of the fever. Light diet until the tongue is clean and temperature satisfactory.

"Blackwaters" may be given Calomel grs. v. on admission, Perchlor. and Sod. Bicarb. Mist. hourly or two-hourly, and as much liquid in the form of milk, barley, or lime water, &c., as they can possibly take until the urine, which is of course carefully measured and saved for the Doctor to see, clears. Sometimes saline injections are ordered and hot poultices to the loins, nothing iced is given by mouth and hot milk is preferable to cold. With the complications of vomiting, and suppression of urine, cases of "blackwater" become very serious and require constant watching and the most careful nursing.

"Enteric" is rare on the coast, as is also "yellow fever," so that malaria in its different forms and

"blackwater" are the principal diseases which attack Europeans out here.

The native wards are usually filled with a variety of medical and surgical cases to be met with in home hospitals, besides occasional cases of beri-beri, sleeping sickness and skin diseases peculiar to the country. Fractures in the case of native patients are as a rule long in uniting. On the other hand, if they can be induced to give their consent to an operation, incisions do remarkably well and generally heal by first intention. Pneumonias and all chest complaints are not at all satisfactory, and natives suffering from them die suddenly and quickly.

The native diets are peculiar to the country; they have several preparations made from corn (*i.e.*

mealies), such as "kenki," "arkasah," and "agidi," any of which may be a diet, also rice, cassada, plantain, and cocoa, which last, by the way, is a root like the yam or cassada, not the cocoa known in England. People rise early out here, generally at the first sign of day-break—there is no dawn—about 5.30,



THE NURSING SISTERS' BUNGALOW AT ACCRA.

which is the coolest and pleasantest time. There is usually then a fresh breeze from the sea and the palm-covered hills look wonderfully green bathed in the morning dew. During the hottest time of the day, about 12 to 2, every one who can, rests; the evenings and nights, are, as a rule, fairly cool. At Accra, one of the few places on the Gold Coast where horses can live, they play polo, there are good tennis courts, a golf course, and a club with a nice reading room for ladies. The roads round Accra, for about twenty miles inland, are good and bicycles and motors are often to be seen. The principal means of conveyance there is a "go-cart," drawn and pushed by natives, which holds two, it cannot be recommended for comfort or speed.

Exports, such as palm oil, palm kernels, etc., are sent down to Accra for shipment from the interior in huge barrels, which are rolled by

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