

Medical Matters.**THE SANATORIUM TREATMENT OF INSANITY.**

In an interesting paper on the Sanatorium Treatment of Active Insanity by Rest in Bed in the Open Air, Dr. C. C. Easterbrook (Ayr) presented his views on this subject, which he summed up as follows to the recent International Congress of Psychiatry:

"Comparing then the general therapeutical effects in active insanity of outdoor exercise, indoor rest, and outdoor rest, I find that outdoor exercise benefits primarily the physical condition, but may retard the mental improvement; that indoor rest benefits primarily the mental condition, but may retard the physical improvement; and that outdoor rest benefits from the first both the mental and the physical condition. Outdoor rest thus from the outset promotes both mental and physical improvement, and so retards neither; further, it avoids the risk of undue exhaustion which attaches to the method of exercise; and lastly, it obviates the evils of bodily inactivity and sluggish metabolism which attach to prolonged indoor rest."

We are, in fact, slowly learning in connection with the treatment of all diseases that it is a cardinal mistake to deprive patients of a plentiful supply of the most valuable gifts of fresh air and sunshine. In days gone by the congregation of patients in crowded and unventilated hospitals led to outbreaks of pyæmia and hospital gangrene; in lying-in hospitals the same conditions were responsible for the terrible mortality resulting from puerperal fever. Patients in consumption hospitals were placed in the worst possible conditions for recovery when with mistaken kindness they were shielded from every breath of air in wards provided with double windows. One of the lessons of the South African War was the excellent results obtained in the treatment, under canvas, of patients suffering from severe wounds as well as medical diseases. And, as in connection with the problem of general hygiene in crowded areas the cry is "back to the land," so it is being increasingly realised that one of the finest factors in the successful treatment of the sick is to take them out of the crowded environment of towns "back to Mother Nature," all of which means that while in towns and cities we must always have hospitals for the reception of the acutely and seriously ill that the aim of the future must be to provide hospital accommodation in the country, to which at the earliest possible moment the sick may be transferred, to be treated as far as may be in the fresh air and revivifying sunshine.

Meetings of Protest.**THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.**

Once again the value to nurses of a weekly organ in the press, and of a Society prepared to take prompt action to defend their rights, has been exemplified. On Thursday, October 17th, the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING was published in London, which drew attention to the proposal of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to degrade its Matrons in status from first to second class officers, and at the same time announced that the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland had convened a Meeting of Protest to be held on the afternoon of Saturday, October 19th.

The notice was a very short one, especially for busy hospital Matrons, but when Miss Isla Stewart, President of the Council, took the chair at 11, Chandos Street, on Saturday afternoon, every seat was filled, and the hall was crowded to the door with Matrons and nurses, who were evidently thoroughly in earnest in the desire to protest.

The President called upon Miss Breay, Hon. Secretary, to read the notice convening the meeting, and letters and telegrams of regret from Matrons who were unable to be present, heartily endorsing the vote of protest. The large majority of the Matrons of the Asylums Board Hospitals were in the room, and others wrote expressing their sympathy with the objects of the meeting.

Thirty-five Charge Nurses and fifty-six Assistant Nurses at the Park Hospital, Hither Green, under the Metropolitan Asylums Board, sent a signed document protesting against the Bye-law depriving the Matrons in M.A.B. hospitals of their rank as principal officers.

Mrs. J. Ramsay Macdonald and Miss Wyatt Papworth (Women's Industrial Union) wrote regretting their inability to attend owing to absence from town, and Miss E. S. Lidgett, P.L.G., regretted her absence for a similar reason, and said she had had no opportunity of enquiring the views of the St. Pancras representatives as to the meaning and purpose of the change proposed in the standing of the Matrons, but thought they might be trusted to maintain the Matrons in their present positions.

LETTER FROM MR. HAROLD SPENDER.

The President then read the following letter from Mr. Harold Spender, a member of the Metropolitan Asylums Board:—

DEAR MADAM,—I should very much have liked to have come to your meeting to-morrow afternoon. Unhappily, an engagement in Bath prevents me. On Saturday last I protested vigorously at the

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