

The New School for Nurses in Paris.

Back in Paris once more, my chief interest was naturally the new "Ecole" at the Salpêtrière. It is almost entirely furnished, only a few little details here and there remaining to be done; the workmen were putting in the telephone; the linen was being sorted and counted, the household supplies of china, kitchen-ware, etc., were unpacked and ready to be put away. Already some of the probationers are in the house, and in the first week of November they will fill up the quota for the first year, sixty-five altogether, and then the second year pupils will bring the number to 150. The completion of this beautiful school is an achievement of which the Administration may well be proud, and M. Mesureur, whose special project and creation it has been, deserves the loyal recognition of nurses for what he has done, and for all that he still intends to do to elevate the standard of life, of education, and of opportunity for the nursing staff of the Paris hospitals. The building throughout is a model of refined and generous architectural lines, of spacious and unstinted dimensions, agreeable and harmonious colouring and fittings. It ranks at once with the most beautiful nurses' schools of the world in its general aspect and completeness, and, in its large and suitable provision for teaching and study it surpasses all those with which I am familiar. I do not, for instance, recall any other school which has within its own walls an amphitheatre like this where lectures and demonstrations in nursing technique can be given. With us, of course, the hospital amphitheatre is usually available for such purposes, but think of the convenience and dignity of having one in the school building. Then, there is a room of superb dimensions to be fitted up as a nursing museum and library. Already the book racks stand in the middle of the room, to be approached from both sides, while around the walls are the open cases for mannikin and skeleton, specimens and objects for use and study. Sixty-five desks and chairs complete the furnishing of this room, and there are, further, six small rooms for quiet study, each containing some six or eight desks and a table for an instructor, or a "quiz-mistress." Then there is a room which is to be fitted up as a pharmacy, where the pupils will receive instruction in *Materia Medica*, and learn the physical properties of drugs, and be initiated into the mysteries of "tisanes." There is only one branch of study for which, I believe, certain

ones of our schools show a more complete equipment, and that is in their diet kitchens; on the other hand the general kitchen in the new school is spacious enough in its dimensions and fittings to be quite equal to the demands of instruction for the nurses in cookery for the sick.

With all the special emphasis laid on the "school," the "home" features of the new "Ecole" are equally admirable. Every pupil will have a single bedroom—charming little rooms they are, too, in their light sunny colouring, with white enamel beds and brass knobs, a wardrobe with one full-length panel of mirror, running water, and two electric lights in each, one a fixture and one a movable droplight. Bedroom tables, wardrobes, and chairs are in light wood like the floors. The windows all over the house are especially large, and are hung throughout with one long, full curtain of heavy white wash material run on a pole and drawn to one side. There are two dining halls—they are really too stately to be called rooms—one for the Juniors and one for the Seniors, with great windows on three sides, yellow and white tiling floors, and tables, each formed of one slab of richly coloured marble. Beside small reception rooms, offices, and ante-rooms, there is a "recreation room" of noble amplitude, again with windows on three sides, and here are great round tables for books and magazines, games or work, a piano, and all the accessories for relaxation and amusement. Then there is, of course, a secluded garden for the nurses—no French hospital lacks that, where they are to have garden chairs and hammocks. The *Surveillante Générale* is housed in very dignified and ample style. She has a suite of seven rooms, including a guest-chamber, her own little kitchen, bath, and dressing-rooms, with a private corridor running alongside, and a private staircase which leads to her offices below. The whole building is warmed by a central heating plant, lit by electricity, and amply supplied with modern plumbing.

I was shown about by Mlle. Duconseil herself. She has a winning personality, expressive of candour and dignity, and has that indefinable suggestion of quiet efficiency so characteristic of French women. I left with the highest hopes and confidence in the progress of the modern nursing reform movement in Paris, and glad that this new experiment is to be conducted on the domain of the Salpêtrière, because M. Montreuil is so especially liberal, and is frankly sympathetic with the whole "woman movement."

The new hospital, in which the pupils will finally be trained, will hardly be completed

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)