

The Hospital World.

IMPRESSIONS OF A VISIT TO MOUNT VERNON HOSPITAL FOR CONSUMPTION AND DISEASES OF THE CHEST, NORTHWOOD.

When I call at a house, whose mistress I do not know, I first observe the manner and appearance of the servant who receives me, and by the time I have seen the drawing-room I make up my mind about the lady of the house.

When I go to visit a hospital, I follow the same rules in regard to the Matron, and have found them infallible.

"A good mistress makes a good servant," and every woman unconsciously puts the reflection of her mind and soul into her surroundings.

I remember once hearing a very wise old lady remark that a woman cannot be everything; she can only be a cook, an upholsterer, or a housekeeper. I was not able to judge either of the culinary or upholstery

qualities of Miss Donaldson, the Matron of the Northwood Hospital, Middlesex, but there was no doubt about her being a good housekeeper, a kind and courteous mistress and Matron, a good and unselfish woman to whom the position and power of a Matron meant something higher and better than being an egotistical autocrat.

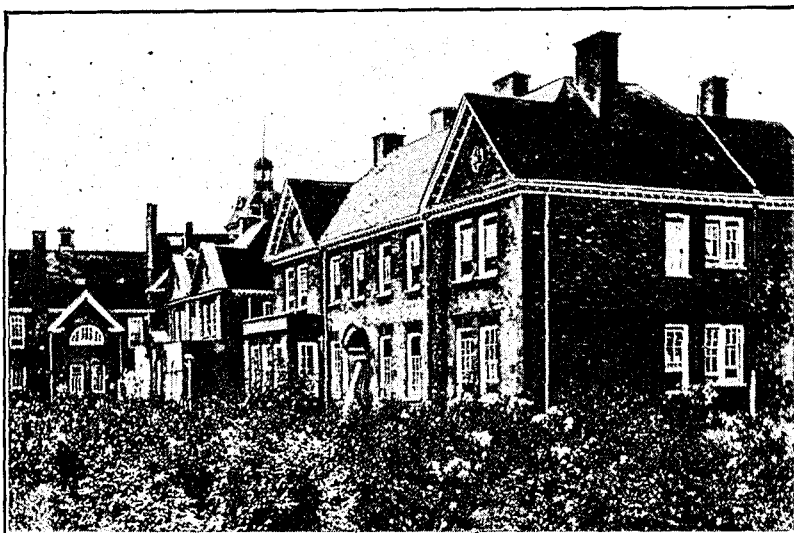
As I entered the gates of the Hospital, which is built in a large space on the hill of Northwood, which expresses its name so truly—for the woods, trees, and scenery are as beautiful as anywhere in England—I wondered what reception I should get and what excuse I should give for my visit. I walked into one of the many blocks of buildings, and I saw one of the prettiest effects of colouring conceivable. The passages of this block formed a cross, the

roofs of which were arched, the pillars and arches being of a beautiful emerald green in tiles, and all the woodwork of dark oak. Part of this block was devoted to offices and doctors' private rooms, and the other, a most cheerful, bright dining room, with white and turquoise green tiles, for the patients—the lucky patients I was going to say—but who can be called lucky if a victim to tuberculosis?

I once heard a doctor say that it is only the very earliest stages, and only the rich, can be cured of this malady. True, how true, were my reflections when, after a most cordial reception and a delightful cup of tea, Miss Donaldson took me around the wards.

The patients were all so happy, so bright, and so lovingly and carefully tended by the

sweet young nurses, who were devoting their youth and strength in their service. The wards were so pretty and so beautifully kept, the views out of the windows "made one think of Paradise," as one of the patients remarked. But all



THE NURSES' HOME, MOUNT VERNON HOSPITAL, NORTHWOOD.

these people come from the working class in London, and sooner or later, more or less cured, they must return to their limited homes, where several share not only the same room, but also often the same bed. They must return to their work, to their coarse food. Can many of them really be cured, I asked myself? I thought of our Conference in Paris, the papers read on the fight against tuberculosis, Mademoiselle Chaptal's ten years of work amongst the French poor. I remembered a poor young man in my district in the East End of London, who had been discharged in a dying and incurable stage from a Sanatorium. His wife was just confined, and she was propped up in bed trying to nurse her baby, and at the same time she was inserting little bits of chenille with a pair of tweezers

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)