

and domestic staff at West House have been strengthened by ten heads of departments, fully responsible under the Lady Superintendent and the Matrons, for the efficiency of their special departments. All are women of good education, and almost all hold certificates of proficiency from hospitals and asylums, or from schools of domestic economy.

Dr. Robertson frankly distrusts any practice peculiar to asylums. His aim is to approximate his methods to those of hospitals, and he states "nothing has aided more in attaining this object than the introduction into asylums of hospital trained nurses. My own policy for many years has been openly to put under suspicion any practice that is in operation which is peculiar to asylums. If I find I can do without it I abolish it, and if I find it cannot be done without, but that it can be replaced by another method of a hospital character, then I introduce that. Subject to this stern criticism, it is surprising how many anachronisms and worthless traditions can be discarded, and with a policy of hospitalisation so definite and uncompromising, progress towards the goal we strive for is a comparatively easy matter."

Dr. Robertson remarks that it is curious that the padded room of which mental experts are now beginning to feel ashamed should have been invented about 66 years ago by Conolly, the great apostle of the non-restraint and humane methods of treatment for the insane. But at that time many patients were violent and aggressive owing to the ill-treatment they had previously received from their attendants. Cases of furious or raging mania such as were described in those days are never seen now because they were goaded into being by the vile treatment they received, whereas skilful treatment has a tranquillising effect. Conolly writes of the nursing staff of that day that they "were worse dressed, and wilder looking than the generality of the patients."

The *Irish Times* publishes an interesting account of the foundation of Dr. Steevens' Hospital, by Madame Steevens, a great philanthropist, in 1720. Grissel Steevens was the daughter of a Royalist English clergyman, who, having preached against Cromwell, was obliged to fly to Ireland, and settled in Athlone with his wife and two children, Richard and Grissel. Richard, who afterwards practised medicine in Dublin, died in 1710, bequeathing property in Westmeath and Queen's County to the value of £600 a year to his sister. If she should marry she was to regard the legacy as her sole property, but in the event of her remaining single,

the testator suggested that she ought to found a hospital for the treatment of those whose "distempers and wounds were curable." It was in the most working class part of the city, between Bow Lane and the banks of the Liffey, that Madame Steevens in 1717 purchased some acres of land, and there prepared to carry out what was as much her own design as that of her brother, contributing at the same time £2,000 towards the building.

The legend that Madame Steevens was a "pig-faced lady" probably arose from the fact that she visited the poorest parts of the town closely veiled, and at the age of ninety-three she had to sit by the front corridor window with the blinds drawn back to convince the people she was not deformed.

The nurses of this historic old hospital are now sent to all parts of the world, and have gained laurels for it even in far off Siam.

Mr. J. C. Eaton has generously notified the Board of Trustees of the Toronto General Hospital that he will contribute 250,000 dollars to the new hospital; he has been appointed by the Provincial Government a member of the Board of Trustees of the hospital in the place of Dr. Orr, who resigned to fill the vacancy. An order in Council has been passed, making the appointment, as the Government considers it of great importance that Mr. Eaton should be associated with the trust.

American nurses are keenly interested in the announcement that the ninth International Red Cross Conference will probably be held in Washington during May, 1912. At the eighth International Conference held in London in 1907 the American Red Cross delegates proposed that the next Conference should be held in Washington, the arrangements being carried out by the Central Committee of the American Red Cross. The International Council at Geneva favourably received the invitation, and has placed itself entirely at the disposition of the American Committee to aid in the organisation of the Conference.

A representative Committee on the Nursing Service of the National Red Cross, with Miss Delano as President is now considering the rules and method of organisation of members of the Service. The *American Journal of Nursing* says that Miss Delano's practical knowledge of Red Cross work and her close touch with nursing affairs make her a most efficient and inspiring leader during this difficult period of organisation.

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