

nurse in visiting foreign hospitals, is the absence of the Matron! The want is very conspicuous, and so contrary to the traditions of her training. A young Italian house surgeon, who spoke French, was sent to me to conduct me round the hospital. It is only two years old, having been built in 1908, on the most approved and up-to-date lines of hospital science.

This new "Ospedale Civico" has entirely replaced the old "Italian Hospital" in the city, which I imagine must be too old and unsuitable to serve any longer the purpose of a hospital. It is now used as a sort of almshouse for old people. The new building is evidence of a fine forward movement.

Who shall say that some reverberating note of our International Congresses has not reached and quickened into action the less progressive Italian mind? We know that Rome is waking up, so we may be sure that the reform movement will spread into the provinces; and Italian Switzerland will not care to be out of the progressive march. The Ospedale Civico is built to contain 200—300 beds; the laudable aim of the architect appears to be, to admit the maximum amount of light and air.

The wards are not large; no more than eight beds did I see in any of them, they are lofty and abundantly airy, and they are heated on the central heating principle.

The walls are of washable paint, of a soft eau de Nil colour. Extreme cleanliness was evident everywhere. The beds looked the acme of comfort, of that type known as Italian bedsteads—a good well-stuffed mattress over a box spring mattress, indeed, the most comfortable of all bedsteads, but which I have never seen in use in a hospital before. Everything was of white within the wards. The entire absence of colour made them look bare and cheerless. Again, flowers and pictures were conspicuous by their absence! "A thing of beauty is a joy," and surely it is a mistake to deny the joy of such things to the sick, upon whom they have undoubtedly such a beneficial effect.

Perhaps this fact was accountable for the air of depression which I again noticed among the patients. Particularly strange in a land of sun and flowers!

At the end of each of the long, wide corridors, a table was placed for the purpose of serving meals to convalescent patients, instead of in the ward—an excellent plan. A great deal of use is made of the balconies which can be closed in with glass panels in the winter. There are a few wards for paying patients, which looked thoroughly comfortable.

There are three good theatres, splendidly built, and equipped with every modern requisite. One for general purposes, one for gynaecological cases only, and one for smaller operations in the casualty room. The tubercular patients were accommodated in a separate block. I was surprised to find no provision for open-air treatment. I am sorry to say that the educational standard of the nurses is not in line with the advance of medical science. "One year to eighteen months" the House Surgeon told me in a tone which seemed to imply that it was of very little importance! Such was the

training of the nurses! Their uniform consisted of cotton gowns with short sleeves, covered by an overall; no caps. Their appearance was not very neat. I should imagine that they were drawn mostly from the uneducated classes. The authorities would do well to visit the fine college for nurses at the Salpêtrière in Paris, with a view to an imitation.

The children, too, have a block to themselves, and are very well cared for.

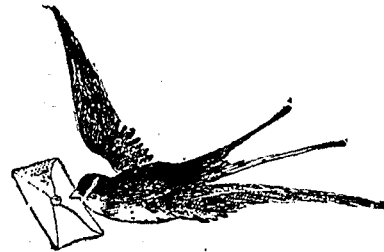
I was very inquisitive, and asked a great many questions, which my attentive guide answered with much patience! He had only been there a month, however, and was unable to satisfy me on all points. He took me everywhere, even into the kitchen, and finally to the Board Room, whose walls were hung with the portraits of notable people, who looked benignly down upon us from their sombre frames, and whose spirits, let us hope, actuate the deliberations of the members! Then, with bows and smiles and thanks on my part, we wished each other good-day.

A week later I had left beautiful sunny Lugano-Paradiso behind me, and was back in—well—there can be no comparison—London to the loyal Londoner is supreme!

BEATRICE KENT.

Letter from the Emerald Isle.

Ballincoona, Caher Daniel,
Co. Kerry.



Our year's record of work is very different from the one which we had hoped to be able to send you. It still has to be, as a

friendly critic put it last year: "Truly Irish—the report of a hospital which does not exist." In many ways it is simply a record of what we have not done.

A widespread and virulent epidemic of measles broke out in the district in July, 1909. The Medical Officer of Health forbade all congregating together until it was over. In consequence, the building was stopped during all the most favourable summer weather, and, when at last we were able to resume, the better part of our masons had found work elsewhere, and it was too late in the year to start afresh. We were therefore only able to raise the external walls to an average of 2 feet 6 inches in height.

Owing to the same cause, we have not yet got our tram-line for carrying stone into working order. Nor is our windmill for raising water the fifty feet necessary, yet erected.

We have unfortunately also to chronicle the loss, through sickness, of our excellent foreman, who made our interests his own.

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