

THE HOSPITAL WORLD.

THE PARK HOSPITAL, HITHER GREEN.

Every one who had seen the Children's Hospital (now Queen Mary's Hospital for Children) at Carshalton, in Surrey, maintained by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, for the sick, debilitated, infirm, and deserted children of the Metropolis, was delighted when the Park Hospital, Hither Green, was devoted to the same good purpose, being no longer needed for infectious cases.

A visit to the hospital shows that under the supervision of the Medical Superintendent, Dr. Birdwood, and the Matron, Miss S. A. Villiers, the hospital is doing most beneficent work. From quite tiny babies to children of sixteen years of age children are received here, instead of being confined in the wards of London infirmaries, and are classified, instead of living as was formerly too often the case, with the adults of all ages and conditions who are to be found in infirmary and workhouse wards, and some of whom are certainly not the best companions for young children.

The Park Hospital accommodates 640 children, and the President of the Local Government Board may well regard his work for the children of the Metropolis with satisfaction.

The babies' ward contains some 30 cots and cradles, and to keep these children fresh and clean and fed must entail hard work upon the nursing staff, for many of them are "bottle babies," and all are small enough to need feeding. Yet even on a hot August afternoon, as we understand heat this year, they all seemed happy and content, and as pleased with life as if they had been born to the purple. This ward, in common with others, has the advantage of wide French windows at the farther end, and of a broad balcony on which the children can lie in their cots if desirable.

For some of the older children who only need minor "treatments" dormitories are provided, with day rooms on another floor. Some of these are able to keep school hours to a certain extent, and it is hoped in the future to organize the instruction by employing teachers for certain hours.

The Nurses' Home is most comfortable, and separate sitting-rooms are provided for the different grades of the staff. The Sisters have both a small sitting-room and a bedroom each, the former overlooking a pleasant garden.

Probationers are received at the age of 19, and a term of training at the Park Hospital would be excellent preparation for a general training.

REFLECTIONS

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

The Lord Mayor has handed over to the Hospital Sunday Fund the sum of £100 placed at his disposal by Lieut. Conneau (André Beaumont) for charitable work in London.

The Most Rev. His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York has consented to accept the Office of President of the 27th Congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute to be held in York in July, 1912.

The authorities at Guy's Hospital have decided that for the future every case attended in the out-patient department shall be treated by a registered medical practitioner. In the past it has been the custom to allow students to see and treat cases of a minor character, but for the future they will only be allowed to do so under the direction of a medical officer. This is an excellent decision, which might well be adopted by other hospitals to which medical schools are attached.

Mr. John Burns, President of the Local Government Board, who recently opened the new buildings in connection with the Poor Law Infirmary at Reading, said that there was no doubt that in the future such institutions would rank as civic hospitals. The question was sometimes asked why, with diminishing pauperism, the cost of maintaining such institutions increased. The reason was that as the wealth of the community increased, its opportunities for helping those who were less comfortable than others also increased, and he was pleased to see that a spirit of benevolence had permeated all classes of society. The community had decided that the poor who were sick, the child who wanted education, the widow who wanted relief should be better treated than they used to be, and the increased cost of Poor Law administration was almost entirely due to the spirit that had demanded better hospitals and better infirmaries. Boards of Guardians had faithfully fulfilled their duties, and pauperism must yield to social, economic, and industrial treatment. The doctor, the schoolmaster, the nurses, the counter attractions provided by the community in poor districts had almost transformed the Poor Law of fifty years ago to something more human and decent. The workhouse was rapidly becoming the home merely for the aged and infirm, and the children in the infirmaries were to-day on the average, from the point of view of clothes, housing, and education, infinitely better off than the children of the average artisan who had to pay the rates outside. The cost was well justified, and the bread thus cast upon the waters would be returned in the form of a more independent community free from the chronic disabilities which existed under the old system.

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