

slating, plumbing, and glazing. Here the Labour Exchange in Cork has proved most helpful.

Our tram-line has brought us many hundreds of tons of stone for building, road-mending and concrete work, up the hill. Our big reservoir is ready for covering. This, with several other items, such as the balcony and the porch roof, would by now be accomplished facts, but for the small omission, "by an oversight" of our merchants, of 45 tons of Portland cement from our last cargo.

I am told that at a distance from our centre, our hospital is known as "The White Elephant." We confidently expect to dispel the illusion when we get into going order.

It is said that a building is half done when the roof is on. But this will not quite hold good at Ballincoona. On wet days our tradesmen have worked steadily on the inside fittings. We have all our internal doors and frames completed, each one solid sheet of venesta, without seam or join. A considerable part of the framing for the partitions is in place on the first floor, and the attics with their circular windows, begin to look cosy and homelike. We have at present no inner staircase, although most of the steps are cast, and the first floor and attics are reached by ladders.

Looking to the future, we have some heavy jobs pending: £80 for the rain-water tank which is to collect the whole of the water from the roof, and form our chief washing supply; £160 for our installation of acetylene gas; £12 to £15 for the erection of our windmill; £134 for our consulting engineer.

We have to put up a building of some size to hold the gas-machine, the disinfecter and a small boiler. Again, we have at present no outhouses and no dairy. We have the internal fittings, stoves and boilers to provide, and, later on, the furnishing to do.

To meet our needs up to now, our income not sufficing, I have been (a) selling out investments; (b) selling the whole of my furniture stored at Oxford, to save the £120, the lowest estimate of a careful and friendly remover, for bringing it over; (c) doing a small share of literary work, as far as time would allow, and giving lectures; (d) writing begging letters for subscriptions. In the winter I wrote to some 150 Irish peers, with the result that twenty only amongst them had the kindness and the good manners to acknowledge my letters.

To turn to finance—the cottage, farm-buildings, farm and garden, tram and trolleys, reservoir, well, sheds, and the hospital building itself have cost £7,214 6s. Of this sum £3,362 11s. was spent in wages. We have received in donations £582.

Our farm and garden are steadily improving and becoming more remunerative. Last year was one of high prices for pigs, in which we promptly speculated. Our pigs brought us £28, cattle £24, bees £1 10s., garden and poultry £28 15s.; in all, with a few etcetras, £85 7s. 7½d. The latter sum

includes jam and marmalade. The previous year we totalled receipts from farm and garden, &c., £52 18s. We have put into the land a fair quantity of artificial manure—basic slag, nitrate of soda, and sulphate of ammonia—and have a magnificent crop of seed hay. We are experimenting with five varieties of imported seed potatoes, and with a better class of oats than is usually grown here. We have put up more fencing, but have not been able to drain a further piece of ground, nor have we planted more trees.

Our live stock consists of 3 cows, 2 yearlings, one of them a handsome and very gentle bull, and 2 calves; a jennet who promises to save us much expense in carting; 6 turkeys and 8 poults, 2 pigs, 24 hens and 2 cocks; and 4 hives of bees.

We turned fish buyers and curers last year, but the market was captured by the Norwegians; and our mackerel will hardly pay their expenses. We cured 45 barrels, each containing 300 to 400 fish.

The Co-operative Agricultural Society, which has its centre in Ballincoona, is working well. Our turnover for the first year was nearly £800, and the Society is proving a great boon to our members. At their suggestion we started a trade in food stuffs, timber, men's and women's clothes, paints and groceries; and a few months since, at their earnest request, we launched out into the buying of eggs. This was made possible by the generous action of the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society, which built and equipped a large store in Caherciveen, from which our co-operators can draw goods, and to which we consign our eggs to be graded, tested and sold.

With increasing business, we require increased accommodation, and are accordingly building a shop and store on a small piece of ground which the society rent from the Hospital. Our co-operators seem likely to have a bright future before them. We have been fortunate in bringing in some of them for the District and County Councils, despite organized opposition.

Practically, the sole care in regard to the hospital is finance. Will you maintain your work and interest others in it? We live and work with the strictest regard to economy; and exist at a cost possible only in Ireland. Your good help, I can, with confidence assure you, will not be squandered.

There have been three serious accidents in connection with the building—a case of concussion of the spine; one of broken ribs; and one, a broken thigh, lies in the adjoining room, as I write. All are doing well. I find our insurance under the Workman's Compensation Act an untold blessing in these cases.

And so, farewell for another year. You would, I think, be pleased if you saw your property now, in its lovely setting of mountain and sea.

Yours sincerely,

ALBINA BRODRICK.

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