

## THE HOSPITAL WORLD.

### THE OPENING OF THE SOUTHWARK INFIRMARY NURSES' HOME.

The erection of comfortable quarters for the nursing staff of a hospital may well be considered a progressive step in nursing affairs, especially as in this case the accommodation had for a long time past been very inadequate. The formal opening of the new building took place on March 3rd, and the pleasant social element that always belongs to such a ceremony helped to make the function memorable. A large empty ward on the ground floor, transformed for the purpose, was used for the meeting. Long lines of pennants and flags were strung across the ceiling, and the usual red carpeting emphasised the festiveness of the occasion in East Dulwich.

In the absence of the Bishop of Kensington, who was unavoidably hindered from being present, the dedication prayers were read by the Chaplain. After a brief description of the Home by the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Devereux, he called upon Sir Arthur Downes, Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, to declare the building open.

Sir Arthur, who had been diving into the limbo of ancient records before coming, made a very interesting contrast between the condition of nursing affairs in 1881 in the old infirmary and that of to-day in the modern building which was erected in 1884.

In the Report of that year it was termed "a mixed institution," containing old people, insane people, able-bodied women, and *four cases of small-pox!* There were insufficient nurses, neglect of patients, and other evils over which it is best to draw the veil, for we are too well acquainted with that dark page of hospital history. Now there is a large staff of nurses, under a Matron and Assistant Matron, and two Night Sisters. The Poor Law Infirmarys are approximating more and more with the voluntary hospitals. The serious note in his address was the falling off of the numbers of candidates for the nursing profession. The speaker attributed this to the fact of there being so many more openings for working women to-day.

Mrs. Stead, a lady Guardian, fastened upon this argument, and elucidated it in a practical manner. She spoke strongly on the subject of adequate remuneration. "Pay your nurses adequately, Sir Arthur," she said good-humouredly but very earnestly. She was of the opinion that sufficient remuneration would attract candidates, and that the needful money

would not be grudged to the nurses, who, she continued, had often others dependent upon them.

Her speech was greeted with great applause. Other members of the Board made short speeches, and then the audience were very generously regaled with dainty refreshments.

### THE NURSES' HOME.

This building, so cosy, comfortable, and complete, was erected at a cost of £8,000; to this must be added a detached house for the Medical Superintendent, and various alterations. The masculine Guardians say they have for a long time been considering the necessity of better accommodation for the nurses. The lady Guardian told her colleagues that the Home ought to have been built 15 years ago! It accommodates 31 persons—viz., the Assistant Matron, twelve Sisters, ten staff nurses, and the domestic servants. The bedrooms, which are placed on both sides of the corridors, are of a sufficient size, furnished with all the requisites of a comfortable bedroom without luxuries, a fireplace, and ample window space of the lattice style. The colour scheme is the same throughout. The walls are distempered cream, with white frieze, and from the dark-stained cornice hang several reproductions of pictures from well-known artists. A square of carpet is laid over the polished floor, blue in the upper rooms and rose du Barry in the lower. The cubicles are almost as nice as the nurses' bedrooms. Happily the time seems to be gone by when half a bedroom was considered sufficient for a nurse. Besides the bedrooms and a small kitchen on the ground floor there are also a large and comfortable sitting-room, writing-room, and library. Good bathrooms, offices, large boxroom, coal cellar, and heated room in the basement complete this charming "Home." A staircase at each end of the corridors is a useful provision in case of fire. Both corridors and staircases are constructed with fire-resisting materials. It was interesting to observe that although economy of means has been strictly observed in the construction of the building, the æsthetics have not been overlooked: refinement of taste is obvious throughout. There is no inharmony of decoration which hits one in the eye! The sitting-room, in which tea was served, is perhaps the *pièce de résistance*, with its pretty green walls and white frieze, green curtains bordered with cream, and among the many pictures the well-known one, "An Avenue in Middelharness."

The Guardians, and the Matron, Miss R. E. Wallace, are to be congratulated upon the success of their endeavours.

B. K.

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