

## THE HOSPITAL WORLD.

### THE INFIRMARY, DUDLEY ROAD, BIRMINGHAM.

Probably one of the best known Poor Law Infirmaries in the kingdom is that at Dudley Road, Birmingham, where for so many years Miss A. C. Gibson was Matron, and which, when built some twenty years ago, was a model of its kind. The present Matron is Miss Thomas, whose portrait we have the pleasure of presenting on this page. She was trained at the London Hospital, E., afterwards acting as Matron's Assistant; from there she obtained the Matronship of the hospital at Northallerton, which she held until her appointment as Matron of the Birmingham Infirmary.

Within the Infirmary walls are a community of patients and staff of 1,500 persons, larger than many villages, and indeed few villages boast a street a quarter of a mile long, which is the length of the central corridor of the Infirmary. From this corridor the wards open out on either side, but in no case are they opposite one another, an arrangement which makes the supervision of two wards by one Sister impossible.

The wards are very bright and airy, with windows on either side, and a bed between every two windows. The children's ward seems to be a haven of refuge for the small people who live there, and the change must be indeed great when they return to their homes in the Birmingham slums, and the city can produce slums as bad, or worse, than any to be found in London. Some of the children had been rescued by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and one poor mite bore marks of terrible ill-usage. She had been in the Infirmary for over a year, and still had great scars on her right arm which will probably never be obliterated. The arm had been broken in several places by the

child's mother, and had been so badly injured that several operations were necessary. The experience must have been a terrible one for a comparative baby. Now she seems quite happy, and evidently a great pet in the ward.

A visit to the great kitchen shows cooking operations proceeding briskly on a gigantic scale—great cauldrons of soup, and the milk puddings cooking for the mid-day dinner. No ovens are large enough to bake all the puddings required, but the thick creamy tapioca, slowly simmering by the gallon, looked most tempting and nutritious. Evidently the milk used in making it was of the highest quality. The Infirmary has its own laundry, the rebuilding of which is at present contemplated.

The operating theatre is well appointed, well lighted, and a considerable number of major operations are performed in the course of the year.

The Nurses' Home, which is approached from the extreme end of the central corridor, is cheerful and comfortable, and each nurse has a separate bedroom, but a number of the nurses prefer to sleep in the open, which they are allowed to do provided they supply their own bedding. It will be realized from our illustration of the croquet lawn, which the Nurses' Home adjoins, that there is ample space in which they can indulge their passion for fresh air.

We gave recently some account of the Maternity wards, one of the most charming departments of the Infirmary.

The Infirmary is an excellent training school, and many of its pupils are carrying on the good traditions learnt there in other infirmary wards in the various parts of the kingdom to the great benefit of the patients.

The duties of each grade are clearly defined, and it may be remarked in passing that the Infirmary seems singularly fortunate in its Sisters, who struck the casual visitor as of a



MISS MARION THOMAS,  
MATRON, BIRMINGHAM INFIRMARY.

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