

EDMONTON MILITARY HOSPITAL.

The War Office authorities have been fortunate in securing the Poor Law Infirmary, Edmonton, as one of the Military Hospitals, for the building is particularly well adapted for the purpose, being quite modern, with an excellent operating theatre, which has so far met all requirements, though it is proposed to instal a larger sterilizer, and an X-ray room has been added.

To most people Edmonton is known only as the place at which John Gilpin, on an historic occasion, proposed to eat his luncheon:

"To-morrow is our wedding-day
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair."

Evidences are still not wanting that Edmonton must have been a charming rural resort at that time. The running brook (or is it a river?), the little ivy-covered houses, and the handsome old country house, now a public building, surrounded by well-kept pleasure grounds, but at present utilized as additional quarters for the nurses at the Military Hospital, all testify to its bygone beauty.

Passing along Silver Street, on the way to the hospital, one is surprised to meet little knots of women, with shawls over their heads and obviously not "raised," as our American friends say, in this country, even if an occasional "ja" did not reach one's ears in the course of their conversation. The mystery is solved when one learns that there is a large colony of Belgian Refugees a little further along the road.

Arrived at the hospital, one finds Miss Dowbiggin, the Matron, in her office in the uniform of the Army Nursing Service Reserve, of which she is a member, and under her guidance has the opportunity of seeing this fine building.

One thing impresses one at once, since it is not a point which is most obvious in most military hospitals, and that is the smart and spick and span appearance of the wards. The patients are all obviously contented and happy, but there is none of the slackness which so often seems to be considered essential for Tommy when off duty. Not only are the wards trim and tidy, but the walls look as if they had just been painted, the

tessellated floors as if they had just been washed, the tables as if they had just been polished, the beds as if they had just been made. Such a high standard means much expert work and vigilant supervision.

The War Office has taken over not only the Infirmary, but its equipment and staff, and in regard to the latter the training of the probationers has occasioned much anxious thought for the standard at Edmonton is high and the methods systematic. However, the curriculum of the pupils in training has now been arranged. The Infirmary patients have been located for the time being in the old workhouse, and there, under a Superintendent Nurse, they receive their training in the nursing of women and children.

Anyone who studies the Syllabus in use will realize the thoroughness of the training arranged by Miss Dowbiggin. The subjects to be taught by the Ward Sisters in the first, second and third years are defined, the Sister is required to initial each item to show that the instruction has been given, and the Examiner, usually the Matron, records her comments as to the results. The same thing is done by the Theatre Sister, to whom certain details are allotted for instruction. Then theoretical instruction is given by members of the medical staff, and a course on general nursing work by the Matron. The examination is conducted by an outside examiner.

We should advise Matrons who are arranging the course of training for their probationers to secure a copy of that in force

at Edmonton, for it is exceptionally well arranged.

In the well-ordered kitchen, in charge of an evidently competent woman cook, the liberal diets are prepared for the large number of patients who, when a new hut, now in process of erection, is occupied will number over a thousand, to say nothing of the medical, nursing, and domestic staffs needed for this large number.

Mechanical aid is necessary in coping with the work and some 900 to 1,000 sausages a day are made with the aid of a machine fed by an orderly.

Another appliance about which Miss Dowbiggin waxes enthusiastic is a potato peeling machine and she considers that every Matron of a large institution should be acquainted with its economy and utility.



MISS A. DOWBIGGIN,
MATRON, EDMONTON MILITARY HOSPITAL.

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