

NURSING ECHOES.

Congratulations to the *Daily News*, which has provided homes for the Fulham tenants who were recently evicted from Jerdon Place and Vanston Place, on account of their houses, some of which had been inhabited by the same families for over a century, being unfit for habitation, and has officially handed these houses over to the Fulham District Nursing Association free of all encumbrance for a period of five years. Some of the families have been accommodated in houses already built, but two cottages have been specially built in the record period of 24 days. The cottages adjoin one another and are similar in structure. In each there is a compact living room, light and airy, where a brightly tiled fireplace strikes a note of welcome. For the convenience of the housewife a fitted oak dresser has been provided, and the distempered walls and ceiling, framed in dark timber, suggest the charm of a seaside bungalow interior. Behind are three bedrooms, and a common passage leads to the back yards, where modern scullery conveniences are provided. Linoleum has been laid in the living rooms, so that they were ready for the evicted families to take possession.

In the September issue of *St. Bartholomew's Hospital Journal* we find some references to nurses and nursing, which are both of interest and may be of use to them.

First, in "A House Surgeon's Mental Notes," we read:—

"Among all the influences which go to the making of a Bart.'s H.S. there is one which stands out above all others; it is responsibility.

"The consciousness of his own responsibility is perhaps the first feeling in the mind of the new H.S., and immediately it makes itself felt, his outlook on his work becomes new, the importance of his knowing his job startles him, and he mops up knowledge greedily.

"Responsibility, it is said, makes a man; it certainly makes house-surgeons.

"Another outstanding influence in the making of a Bart.'s H.S. is experience, especially his own personal experience of cases under his care.

"In one short year this experience may be very considerable, and when to it is added the lessons learnt from the tales told by his colleagues, and the wise sayings of ward sisters, the sum total makes him conversant with the principles of surgery and perhaps confident enough to practise it.

"The third influence moulding the H.S. is that of the sisters in his wards. Happy is the man whose ward-sisters know their job, and can put him on the road to understanding and coping with the human side of sick people and their troubles.

"Here, in practical clinical treatment, is a part of training found in no text-book, and yet a part which he will afterwards find to be second in importance to diagnosis only. By his ability to treat his private patients with that tact and sympathy with which sisters, by long experience and constant care, have learned to treat cases in their wards, the reputation of a young surgeon may stand or fall.

"One learns much from sisters. Be slow to criticise and change their methods. Their experience is truly

vast, yours is as nothing; learn, therefore, and be thankful that you are not yet alone in private practice. One gets many useful tips from nurses. Their training is more clinical and less academic than yours. Their services are usually much more appreciated by the patient than yours; therefore learn their methods, that your private patients may appreciate you. The time may come when you yourself are nurse, sister, H.S. and surgeon all in one."

Next we have the opinion of a patient who spent a holiday in the hospital for the purpose of undergoing an operation. He writes:—

"Let me dwell a little on the most memorable feature in the whole scene—the one that gave meaning to the scene—the nurse. I use the term generically. It stands for the embodiment of a quality new to my experience. We ordinary folk, however nice we may try to be to everybody, are inevitably influenced by particular likes and dislikes. Our benevolence is a matter of sentiment, and depends to a great degree on the personality of the recipient. Not so with the nurse. You see that her good offices come from no regard for you as yourself, but purely for you as a sufferer. She has the same to the man who preceded you, and will be the same to the man who will follow you. She has neither predilections nor aversions. She arrives and she departs, as does the sun, with a 'Good-morning, everybody'—'Good-night, everybody.' In that *everybody* lies the essence of her all-embracing, matter-of-fact charity—a virtue which, impersonal without being mechanical, seems to combine the efficiency of education with the spontaneity of nature, and this I had to go to St. Bartholomew's to discover. The discovery, I think, was well worth a surgical operation. . . .

"So a tortnight passed—moments of rebellion against the tyrannical discipline notwithstanding—most pleasantly. Never had I slept so well or eaten so hungrily. Never had I enjoyed such absolute rests for body and mind. Even when bodily vigour began to return there still remained a mental vacuity which enabled me to appreciate why in certain languages 'blessed' is a synonym for 'half-witted.' A blessed existence indeed, in which nothing concerning you is your concern.

"Everything is done for you. All you have to do is to be ill. I am not sure that I should care for such beatitude as a permanent condition. But as an interlude it had its charm. The memory of it is a possession for ever; when I want to recapture the sense of tranquillity, I need but turn in spirit from the roar and clatter of the world to the cloistered, kindly calm of a ward in St. Bartholomew's."

No section of the community have taken a keener interest in the Tattoo in the Stadium at Wembley than trained nurses. And, indeed, it was a brave show. The Battle, and Florence Nightingale's camp, with the Lady of the Lamp energising, directing, alleviating suffering, was a memorable feature of a splendid display.

We are glad to note that the Minister of Home Affairs for Northern Ireland is supporting the principle of the appointment of Registered Nurses to positions under the control of his department. A letter was recently

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