

## The Nursing Record "At Homes."

No. 3.

MISS C. J. WOOD AT THE NURSES' HOSTEL.

THE Lady Superintendent, for such Miss WOOD virtually is, although she disclaims the title as she has an acting manageress under her, is an early riser, and she is quite ready to receive me, at a very matutinal hour, when I call upon her at No. 27, Percy Street, W.

"Will you tell me what the 'Nurses' Hostel' really is, and when it was started, for I must confess to a woeful ignorance on the subject?"

My hostess is leniency itself with regard to it, and explains how this comfortable home was originated.

"Nurses have for long felt the want of some comfortable quarters, where they might always go when circumstances brought them to the Metropolis. Very frequently a Nurse arrives in town with a patient from the Continent or still further away; the patient reaches his or her home safely, and the Nurse is dismissed. Perhaps she is quite a stranger to the vast city, or she may have only a very slight knowledge of it which does not include that of suitable lodgings or moderate priced hotels; to fill this want the Hostel was started some three years ago."

"And do you find it is much appreciated?"

"I think it is; we have numbers of Nurses always here. They need no other recommendation but their profession, and when they write and ask for a room, they get it if we have one to spare. Our first visitor was from South Africa."

"Is yours then a purely philanthropic institution?"

"Far from it; it is thoroughly commercial. Nurses are a wage-earning class, and I think that they are quite capable of paying for the benefits they receive."

"You have two houses, have you not?"

"Yes. I took the one next door at the beginning of this year, and we have room for about forty in it, with the cubicles and private rooms."

"Do you live with your visitors?" I asked, although I had a shrewd suspicion that such a busy woman as Miss WOOD would prefer to have some part of her day to herself, and the pretty sitting-room in which I found her, was I knew her own."

"I take my meals with them, but I do not use their sitting-rooms. I like them to feel quite free, and we have no regulations at all beyond those of knowing

who is going to be in for meals, and a fixed hour for entrance at night."

"Does all your work lie in the house?"

"Oh no, very little of it; my duties here are nearly all deputed to my manageress. I am otherwise very actively engaged in the Nursing profession, and have been so ever since I left the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond Street, where I was from 1863 to 1887. I made up my mind then that I would devote my life to the care of sick children or of Nurses."

"And you do something for both?"

"I am on the Committee of the Invalid Childrens' Aid Society, and I instituted this home."

"What other Associations are you connected with?"

"I am Hon. Secretary for the Royal British Nurses' Association, and that takes up a lot of my time. I go there every day when I am in town; then I am also Secretary of the 'Guild of St. Barnabas' for Nurses; and on the Committee of the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association."

I cannot refrain from wondering how the quiet, somewhat delicate-looking lady can accomplish so much; but I have not yet learned the extent of her duties.

"My work for the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association takes me away from London about four times during the year, for I visit all the Nurses we send to the different Workhouses in the United Kingdom, and give them a little advice with regard to their work, or a little admonition if it be

necessary. I have been from Edinburgh to South Devon in my travels, so you see how necessary it is for me to have a manageress under me in the Hostel, one who is capable of taking my place at all times."

"Do the Nurses use the Hostel as a place of meeting and arranging interviews?"

"Yes, and a number of letters and telegrams come here for them when they are not here; if these are not either forwarded to them or answered at once, it might mean the loss of a case to the Nurse."

"Do you then undertake to procure engagements for those Nurses who stay under your roof?"

"Certainly not. But they very frequently do obtain employment whilst here; but I do not hold myself responsible for the Nurses, nor do I make any charge for employment thus found."

L. A. S.

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*In future we hope to be able to have an "At Home" in the first number of each month.*



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