

flowers." This is as untrue as the whole rest. The patients are met with the greatest sympathy, and are very content; in the ward-rooms—with the exception of some few where the men did not like it—there are flowers in the windows, the patients themselves cultivate different sorts of flowers for sale, and as they have full permission to take what flowers they like in the rich gardens, it is nothing but ridiculous when he tells how he "longed to take some of the beautiful flowers from the gardens" and arrange in the sickrooms. And as ridiculous it is when he laments as there being no prints and pictures and no musical box. The patients decorate the walls with a great deal of photos of their relatives as well as with coloured prints, and if Mr. Shambrock had spent some time in the Hospital, instead of running through it like most tourists, he might have heard music from different instruments, harmonicon, guitar, and sometimes violin, besides hymn-singing.

This may be enough to show that Mr. Shambrock's account of the Hospital is quite untrue, and I am sorry that we have, up to this date, been so ready to grant permission to see the Hospital. We have made the experience that many an ignorant person has misused our friendliness, and, for the future, we shall have to act otherwise.

WE publish this communication, of course, as our distinguished correspondent imagines that his Hospital has been unfairly described in our columns, but in justice to our contributor "Shamrock," we have first submitted the above article to her, and received the following reply:—

I regret extremely that Dr. Danielssen should have taken my remarks as a reflection upon the management of the Bergen Leper Hospitals. This they were never meant to be.

My acquaintance with them, as he says, was but a passing one, but I must insist upon the absolute accuracy of my "impressions," which, according to a writer of repute, are more capable of recording truth than are the knowledges of long acquaintance. I was wrong, apparently, when I described the two country girls, who do the nursing of one of the Hospitals, as being lepers. My error arose from my limited knowledge of the Norwegian tongue, and I apologise for it. But the more important fact that these two country girls constitute the whole nursing staff of an establishment, consisting of a number of wards, male and female, is admitted, and so my statement, that "of nursing, as we understand the term, there is none," is confirmed. I brought no accusation of uncleanness against the Hospital floors, but Dr. Danielssen is giving us pleasing intelligence when he tells us

these are washed every morning. But when he naively "dares say that you will find no other Hospital *where the cleanliness and nursing is better*" than in this poor leper asylum, nursed by two untrained country girls, it only proves that Dr. Danielssen's and my standpoints of nursing are far from being one and the same.

To the fact that "the doctors are most kind and devoted" I bore testimony, but even this cannot prevent the aspect and general tone of the place from being absolutely cheerless and desolate as I described. That these Hospitals do not strike the patients in the same light, I can well believe, after seeing the meagre poverty of Norwegian peasant homes, but to one accustomed to the clean, bright æstheticism of our English Hospitals, the effect is gloomy and depressing to an extreme.

I repeat that nothing was further from my intention than the casting of stones. My thought was to create sympathy for the sufferers. It did not occur to me that I was throwing blame upon the administration, whose object must be pure philanthropy and kindness. Contrasted with that from which they are rescued—the isolation, degradation and misery of the village leper—the asylums are doubtless Elysium, but they do not strike one who is used to English institutions as being all that they might be. And this I uphold without withholding in the least my tribute of honour to those who work amongst these gloomiest of human facts.

Dr. Danielssen, from his own standpoint, would do wrong to decide upon closing the hospitals in future to the travelling public. He should, on the contrary, open it still more freely in order that they may judge the better whether he or I am wrong in our differing estimates of these dreary places.

SHAMROCK.

Inventions, Preparations, &c.

SLATE PENCIL SHARPENER.

THE Slate for writing purposes is one of those venerable appliances which, practically unimproved since the day of their discovery, still manage to hold their own against all new comers. It would be more popular still, undoubtedly, were the difficulty of sharpening the pencil removed. An ingenious little appliance for effecting this, has lately been invented by Mr. Robert Elliott, of 60, Fawcett Street, Sunderland. It consists of a small file-like piece of steel, adapted for fastening to the frame of the slate; the end of the pencil is drawn firmly over this a few times, and the required point is quickly obtained. The cost at a penny each is not high.

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