

A NEW HOME FOR INEBRIATES: CALDECOTE HALL, NUNEATON.

BY THE REV. H. H. AYSCOUGH.

CALDECOTE HALL, situated amid a wealth of woodlands, midway between Nuneaton and Atherstone, has been purchased by the Church of England Temperance Society as a retreat for male drug victims and inebriates.* The acquisition of the Hall commemorates the Jubilee of the C.E.T.S. Police Court Mission, which has 177 missionaries, for whom the place will also serve as a rest-home. It will also be utilized as a meeting-place for conferences, which hitherto have taken place in various diocesan retreats.

The property, which was erected by the late Mr. Henry Townshend about forty-five years ago, consists of a mansion of handsome proportions, built of stone and brick, with stone-mullioned windows of the Jacobean style of architecture, and fitted with electric light and every modern convenience. It is delightfully placed in a finely-timbered park, on the south-east bank of the River Anker. The building stands in fifteen acres of pleasure grounds and gardens. The chipped granite walks are flanked by grass margins, with belts of rhododendrons and shrubbery borders containing specimens of conifers of many varieties. A lime avenue on the south-west is flanked by a magnificent herbaceous border, and a unique rose garden is enclosed by a rare five-foot box hedge. There is a terrace garden on the south with stone balustrading, and the grounds adjoining contain specimen beech, cedar, hornbeam, and lime trees, shady lawns for tennis, croquet, rock garden, bog garden, bamboo walk, ornamental pool, island pond, and woodland walks, while the church stands within the grounds, close to the mansion.

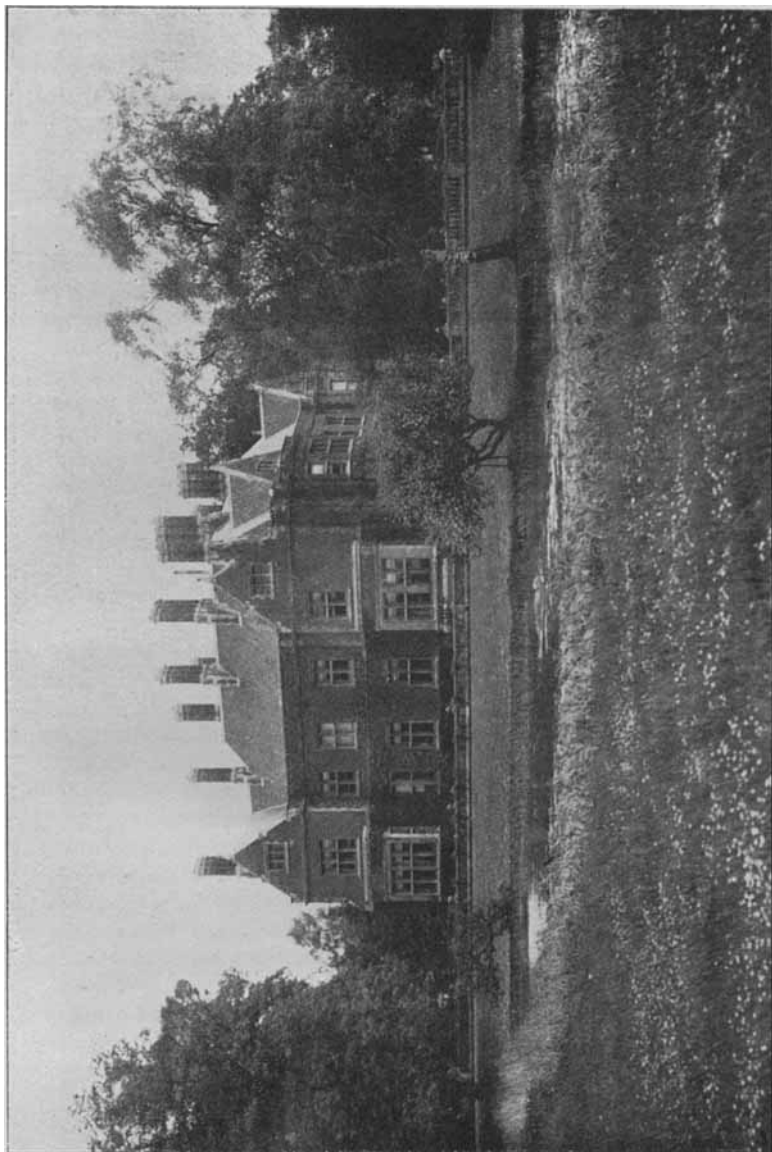
The Society has provided for the inclusion of two medical practitioners with expert knowledge of inebriety on the Board of Management. These have been selected by the Federation of Medical and Allied Services, who have nominated Sir William H. Willcox, President of the Society for the Study of Inebriety, and Sir James Purves-Stewart. Dr. Alfred E. Carver, the

* A copy of an illustrated prospectus of Caldecote Hall can be obtained on application to the Head Office of the Church of England Temperance Society, 40, Marsham Street, Westminster, London, S.W. 1.

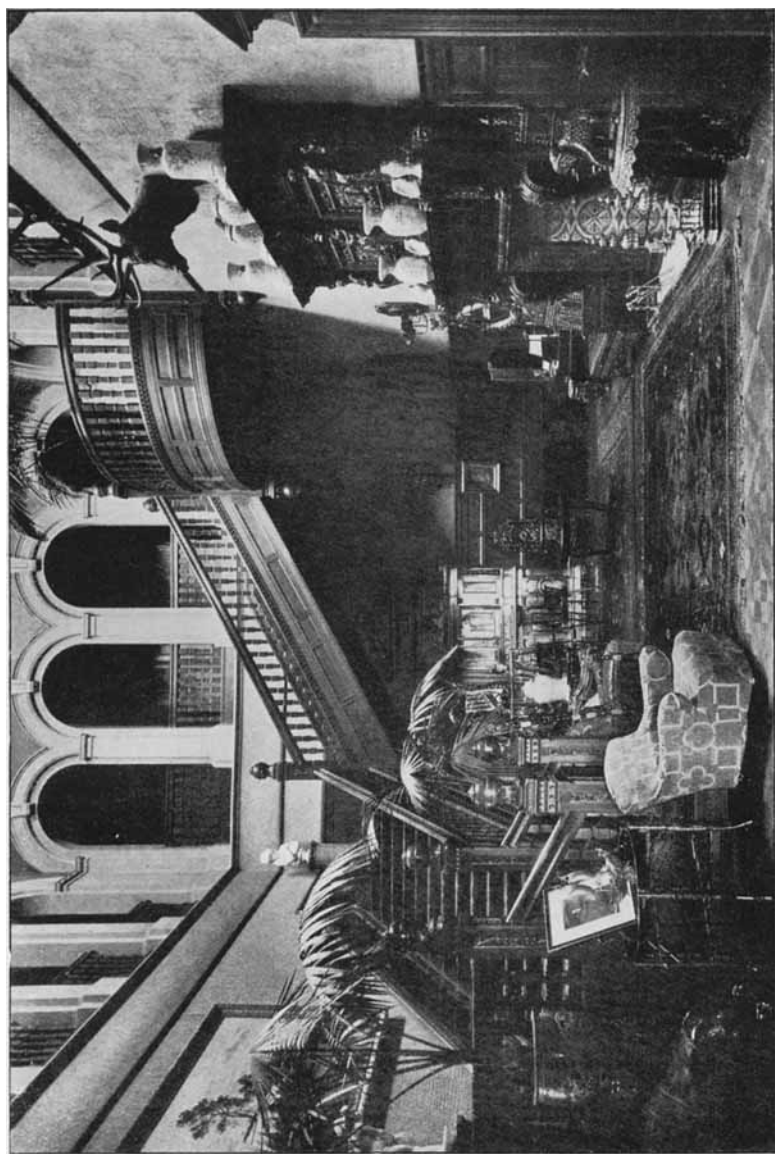
resident medical officer, was formerly house-surgeon at St. Bartholomew's, and later medical superintendent to the Birmingham and Midland Hospital for Nervous Diseases. The Rev. Canon R. Chadwick, rector of Caldecote, will discharge the duties of visiting chaplain to the home; and the Board of Management is under the chairmanship of the Bishop of London, with the Archdeacon of Warrington as deputy-chairman. The institution was formally opened on December 8, 1925, by the Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks.

The general principle has been adopted of charging all patients a flat rate for maintenance, medical attention, etc., and then a further charge according to the accommodation selected. By this means the charges have been arranged to suit all classes of patients. The fees are normally £2 15s. per week (including medical attendance), but it is hoped that in cases of extreme poverty some assistance will be possible towards the fees from the Poor Patients' Fund.

The historical associations of Caldecote are full of interest, especially an incident in connection with a former manor-house, which had its occurrence during the Civil Wars. Lord Nugent, in his "Memorials" of John Hampden, gives the following details: "Scarcely has the siege of Warwick Castle been raised when Prince Rupert, with from five to six hundred cavalry, marched upon Caldecote Manor House, in the north of the county, with intent to take it by surprise. It belonged to Mr. William Purefoy, a gentleman of ancient family, a Member of the House of Commons, and colonel of a regiment in garrison at Warwick Castle. When Rupert summoned Caldecote—Sunday, August 28, 1624, just as the villagers were going to church—there was none within but Mrs. Purefoy, her two daughters, Mr. Abbott, her sister-in-law, eight serving-men, and a few maid-servants. This brave little garrison refused to surrender, inspired by the example of a woman's courage and fidelity to maintain the charge for her absent husband. The history of the Civil Wars affords several such instances. The stories of Lathom Hall, held by the Countess of Derby, and of Wardour Castle by Blanche, Lady Arundell, have added lustre to those noble names. The holding of Caldecote was no less heroic, nor its capitulation less honourable. The assailants broke down the main gate of the outer court; but the men, stationed at the windows, received them with so well-directed a fire that at the first onset three of Rupert's officers and several of his soldiers were slain. There were twelve muskets in the house, the women loading them as the men continued the execution with rapid and deadly aim. The attack continued



CALDECOTE HALL: A NEW HOME FOR INEBRIATE CASES, NUNEATON.
General view of the Institution.



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Interior of the Main Hall.

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for several hours with repeated assaults, in the intervals between which, as the bullets were expended, the women ran the pewter of their kitchen dishes into moulds for a fresh supply. At length, towards nightfall, mortified with the obstinate resistance and with the loss he had already sustained, Rupert drew off his party, but as he retired he set fire to the barn and outhouses. The wind blowing fresh upon the main building, he again advanced under cover of smoke and darkness; and now—the ammunition within failing, the house threatened with instant conflagration, and no hope of success remaining—the brave lady went forth and claimed protection from the Prince, stipulating for the lives of her garrison. It was then first that he was made aware of the smallness of the force which had so gallantly withstood so fierce and protracted an assault. He granted her conditions, and to his honour, as Viccars confesses, ‘being much taken with their notable valour,’ saved their lives and house from plundering, saying to Mr. Abbott that he was worthy to be chief commander in an army if he would go with him; but he modestly refused it. However, the said Prince performed his promise, and would not suffer a pennyworth of the goods in the house to be taken from them, and so departed.”

Caldecote village is an ideal situation for a retreat for inebriates. It is probably unique, in that it possesses no public-house, shop, post-office, or school. Caldecote Hall, Weddington Hall, Lindley Hall, and Higham Grange, all former seats of great patrons of the Atherstone Hunt, are now serving vastly different purposes. Caldecote is a men’s home; Weddington has been converted into flats; Lindley razed to the ground; and Higham a convalescent home for Warwickshire miners.