

The following petition has recently been addressed to Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses:—

"We, undersigned people of Achill Island County Mayo, Ireland, respectfully beg that Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institution for Nurses will on no account remove our present Queen's Nurse from among us. She has been with us for the past four years, and we cannot find words to give an idea of her great worth and services. We honestly believe that she has saved the lives of a great deal of the women of this parish since she came amongst us, as previous to her coming the women here were almost all dying after confinement. It was deplorable to see young mothers falling away and leaving so many helpless orphans behind them. We, therefore, implore the noble institution to reconsider their order, and leave us our much needed nurse, as there is a population of eight thousand and only one doctor to attend them. If this good nurse is taken from us we fear the same fast death roll will commence again. Hoping you will grant our request."

The petition is signed by the parish priest, vicar, and forty-three inhabitants of Achill, many of them able only to make their marks.

The Achill Queen's Nurse Fund has now been started to provide support for a Queen's Nurse in Achill, but at present the annual subscriptions do not nearly amount to the required sum. Subscriptions and donations may be sent to the secretary, Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, St. Katherine's Precincts, Regent's Park.

A most enjoyable lecture was given last week to the members of the Dublin Nurses' Club by Dr. MacDowel Cosgrave, on the subject of "Touring on Cycles." The lecture was illustrated by 100 lantern slides.

A book which we have found very fascinating is "The Romance of Religion," by Olive and Herbert Vivian. In it they have given us a glimpse of all manner of various things, from the corybantic piety of the dancing dervishes to the eternal silence of the Trappists, from an opera in a cathedral to the miraculous Bambino of the Ara Cœli. The homage which the City of Rome still pays the Santissimo Bambino, the "Miraculous Little Doctor," in whose curative powers every pious Roman believes with all his heart, is, we learn, merely a sturdy, chubby, rosy-cheeked little figure carved in wood. Exuberant piety has placed a jewelled crown upon his head, and gratitude has adorned him with countless gems. Those who are not too ill are brought to "The Little Doctor" in the church, but he goes out sometimes three or four times a day to visit patients, travelling in a gorgeous case lined with elaborately embroidered white satin. In the old days before Italian Unity, the Bambino went about in sovereign state—

"Some people say that the Bambino is less popular in Rome than he was, for Italians always reverence pomp and magnificence, and the poor little Bambino has been sadly shorn of his splendour during the last fifty years. At the beginning of the century he was treated as a prince, and had his own civil list, and up to 1849 possessed his own stables, carriages, and horses. In 1848, when the Pope was chased from Rome, the people chose out the most splendid of his coaches and presented it to the Bambino. It is said that when Pius IX. returned again he felt scruples at taking back what had been offered to God. Nowadays, however, the Bambino does not possess any carriage of his own, and those who wish to see him must send one. Now the precious image passes by unrecognised, but in old days everyone knew when it was coming, for it drove out in state like a prince, and, as its attendants held it up at the windows, the crowds on either side fell upon their knees."

Nurses, not Special Constables.

The story told by Miss Emily Hobhouse of her deportation from South Africa is not pleasant reading for those who wish to believe that where the British flag floats personal freedom is assured to law-abiding members of the community. Miss Hobhouse has now made a full report to the committee of the South African Women and Children's Distress Fund, of the circumstances, and details, under which she was prevented from landing at Cape Town, detained as a prisoner on the "Avondale Castle," removed by force to the transport "Roslin Castle," and brought back to England against her will.

We are glad to note that the two army nurses who were sent on board the "Avondale Castle" to remove Miss Hobhouse to the "Roslin Castle" by force, responded to an appeal made to them by her. Weak and ill from all she had gone through, she had informed the authorities that she was not well enough to return in the "Roslin Castle." On the representations of Miss Hobhouse that the "laws of humanity and nature are higher than military law," to their credit, be it said, the nurses silently left the room.

An hour later, however, the responsible officer returned with two soldiers who removed her.

Perhaps some of our readers will be inclined to criticise this line of action upon the part of military nurses. Presumably they had received orders to help to remove Miss Hobhouse. We, however, support emphatically their right to judge for themselves under these unique and most difficult circumstances. As Miss Hobhouse considered it her duty to refuse removal without the use of physical force, we think that the nurses showed great discretion in not laying hands upon her. It is no part of a nurse's duty to act as a special constable of police.

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