

**Nursing in Germany—Pioneer Work  
by the Empress Frederick.\***

BY A TRAVELLING SISTER.

The late Empress Frederick of Germany, like all the other members of the English royal family, was keenly interested in nurses, hospitals, and the welfare of the nursing profession.

Shortly after the Franco-Prussian war, inspired by the sufferings of the soldiers of the Fatherland owing to the scarcity of nurses on the battlefields, she set to work vigorously to found nurse training schools and to raise the standard of hospital nursing.

The chief monument of her work for German hospitals rests in the Victoria House Nurse Training School connected with the Friedrichshain Krankenhaus at Berlin, one of the most important hospitals in Germany.

It is placed in the centre of a large and beautiful park and surrounded with the charming gardens which are nearly always to be found attached to German hospitals.

The hospital contains rather more than 900 patients, so that the wards afford a wide and varied training ground.

The late Empress started the nursing house attached to this fine hospital in 1881, and christened it in honour of her mother, Queen Victoria of England. Two years later it was handsomely endowed by a large grant from the city of Berlin.

Owing largely to the pioneer work of the Empress Frederick, the whole of Germany began to realise the importance of the thorough and systematic training of sick nurses.

There is no doubt that trained nursing in the Fatherland originated in military needs.

The warlike wave which infected Europe before, during, and after the Franco-Prussian war gave a wonderful impetus to the trained nurse movement. It was felt that competent nurses must be raised up to care for the soldiers of future wars. Germany resolved that the nursing chaos of the Franco-Prussian battlefields should never be repeated.

The famine in nurses and the horrible sufferings of the soldiers who died in large numbers from neglect, from lack of food and water, on the battlefields and in the camp hospitals roused the nation to a great enthusiasm as to training schools for nurses.

And the nurse schools and hospitals made in Germany are beginning to take high rank. At this leading Berlin hospital the course of training has been extended to four years.

Not long since one year's hospital training was considered quite enough for the German nurse.

The theory in Germany is that the training of the pupil nurses is done entirely by the medical house staff.

For the first six months the pupils of the Friedrichshain Hospital attend practical demonstrations and lectures given by the doctors twice a week. But, of course, their practical ward work is learned from the "over sister." But it would be heresy to point out this obvious fact to a physician of the Fatherland.

Curiously enough, during her first six months the pupil nurse never goes near a patient. It would be contrary to the ruling etiquette of this hospital to allow a new pupil the privilege of performing the least service to the sick. She busies herself with text-books and theory, interspersed with scrubbing, dusting, and general housework in the wards.

Each pupil when she enters for a course of training pays a deposit fee of eighty dollars to the Victoria Nursing House. This sum is duly returned to her at the end of her graduation. But if she leaves the hospital without finishing her full four-year course, she forfeits the entire deposit fee. And eighty dollars is a big sum to the thrifty German. Consequently few fall out of the nursing ranks, as is so often the case when no penalty attaches to "changing one's mind."

For the first six months of their pupilage the embryo nurses receive no payment. After the expiration of this trial period a nominal salary of two dollars and twenty-five cents is paid each month up to the end of the first year, when five dollars a month is given during the remainder of the four years' training. Laundry is provided, so that, with the proverbial good management and economy of the race, the German pupil nurse finds her small salary supplies all her modest needs.

When the nurse passes her final examination and obtains the coveted honour of her Victoria House certificate, she is presented with a silver chain, on which hangs a crown and a big monogram, "V. H." (Victoria House).

At all times when on duty and in uniform she proudly wears this decorative chain of office round her neck, despite the fact that a long dangling chain is apt to prove something of a stumbling block during the performance of sick-room duties.

Like all the newer German hospitals, this one is built on the pavilion plan, and each ward contains from thirty to forty patients. A smaller ward is attached to each for the use of convalescent patients.

In most of the German hospitals, as a point of hygiene, patients on the road to recovery are put

\* The Trained Nurse and Hospital Review.

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