

and borrowed all the alcohol they had, so as to light up again. Salvatore then wanted to drink; he takes only water now, and except for dyspnoea does not seem to actually suffer. The window opposite his bed is open, and I helped the patient who sleeps by it to arrange sheets so as to keep off some of the cold air.

The night passed quietly, one or other infermiere allowed to sleep, the other answering promptly any call, but keeping far away from the open window and poor Salvatore between times. At three o'clock I left the best infermiere in charge, went upstairs to my room, and boiled water for a cup of "Maggi's" soup. It was horribly cold, so I filled a hot-water bottle and curled up in an armchair, sleeping till five. I found Salvatore just the same; and both infermieri were beginning to sweep and put the ward in order. They clean really well, pouring creolin on the floor and swabbing it well with cloths on a broom. What they do not do well is cleaning the patients! They neither bring them water nor make their beds inside, contenting themselves with putting all tidy outside.

January 11th.—The chief sent orders yesterday to move poor Salvatore to one of the isolation rooms, as he was "a source of danger to his neighbours"; but this order had to be approved by the President, and his answer only came after I had left at seven (One of the young doctors offering to visit the ward constantly, and my poor unruly boy being unconscious, I decided not to spend a second night in the ward.) Consequently the Economo had left the hospital, and the doctor in charge had to send to Cariati, where he lives, to ask for the key of the room. The Economo was out, and no one knew where he kept the key! By the time they got it they discovered another key was required to pass a corridor, and, as it was then midnight, the doctor declined the responsibility of sending a third messenger, so the poor boy remained in the ward, his bed surrounded by carbolised sheets and the spirit lamp kept alight. When I came in the morning Padre Filippo had given the last sacraments, and by ten o'clock all was over.

January 12th.—The Principessa telegraphed yesterday to ask Princesse d'A— to speak to a very influential member of the Consiglio, that he may explain at the meeting that permission to open a nursing school at the Gesu Maria had been granted to her, and that it could not matter whether she placed one or other nurse-direttrice at its head. The poor little Princess, knowing the meeting was to be to-morrow, had a dreadful time getting at this great man to-day! She sent twice, but each time he was out; finally, at six o'clock, her husband kindly went and found him. He fully approved, and promised all his help, saying he would go to the Princess before the meeting to-morrow and talk it all over.

(To be continued.)

2,000 LEPERS IN PORTUGAL.

Dr. Magalhaes, a well-known Oporto physician, publishes the startling statement that 2,000 lepers are known to exist in Portugal, an alarming number in a population of five millions, and exceeding the number of cases in any other European country.

Many of these lepers, says the doctor, are employed, to his personal knowledge, as bakers, barbers, and shopboys. Only a few months ago in the town of Rezende several gallons of oil were sold after being used as a bath for a leper!

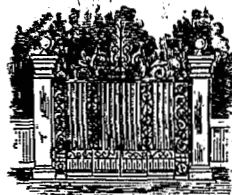
Outside the Gates.

FLOWERS OF THE SEASON.

CHAPTER II.

FEBRUARY.

By MRS. C. CARMICHAEL STOPES.



In spite of the severe character given, and often justly, to "February Fillydyke," flowers are not so afraid of her weather as might have been expected. Snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*) may occasionally appear in January, but they are sure to appear

this month, perking up their brave little white buds to see what the sun is about. So constant are they that they have been called the "Maids of February." They are found all over Europe and Western Asia in meadows and copses, have been naturalised in this country, and are found wild in some counties, notably Hereford and Denbigh. I am sorry to say that old Gerard does not mention them in the 16th century, nor John Evelyn in the 17th, nor Gilbert White in the 18th. So it would seem that our dear little Snowdrop, emblem of chastity and modesty, had originally come to our island as a visitor, but made up its mind to remain as a friend. We must not forget in comparing flower calendars that in our country there is a considerable difference of latitude and of temperature, altered from the normal by the position of places in relation to the Gulf Stream or to northern winds. Nor must we forget that old calendars calculated their dates twelve days later than our modern ones. Pope Gregory reformed the reckoning, in all countries under his influence, in 1582. But his astronomical ruling was not followed in every country at the same time. It was only made legal in England in 1753, did not become universal here for some time later, and it has not reached Greece yet. Twelve days sometimes makes a marked difference in the progress of spring flowers. I do not know which system was used by the famous naturalist, the Rev. Gilbert White, of Selborne, Hampshire, who was born in 1720 and died in 1793. His plants appear very early, and it may interest some to know his recorded dates. By this month he had seen in bloom the Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), the Wallflower (*Cheiranthus Cheiri*), common creeping Crowfoot (*Ranunculus repens*), Dandelion (*Leontodon Taraxacum*), the little creeping Speedwell (*Veronica Agrestis*), the Barren Strawberry (*Fragaria Sterilis*), the Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus Aculeatus*), the Coltsfoot (*Tussilago Farfara*), the Pilewort or lesser Celandine (*Ficaria Verna*), Sweet Violet (*Viola Odorata*), the Daffodil (*Narcissus Pseudo-Narcissus*), and the Crocus (*Crocus Vernis*). I have not myself found all these in my February wanderings, but it may encourage flower-lovers to know that someone else has seen them. The Hazel also (*Corylus Avellana*) flowers early in February, and the Filbert (*Corylus Sativus*) about a fortnight later. There seem to have been some changes in the wild-flower list of the country. The autumn Crocus or Saffron is certainly indigenous, and the spring

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)