

Address to the Sisters of the Bavarian Association of the Red Cross.*

BY THE MATRON, SISTER CLEMENTINE VON WALLMENICH.

It is one of the highest privileges of my office as Matron of the Sisterhood and of the Institution to speak to-day before your Majesty and this august assembly, and to you, my beloved Sisters, on the most important day of your life.

We had the honour, only a few months ago, of being present at the gracious bestowal of the Golden Cross by Her Serene Highness, our Patroness. The cross was presented to our Head Sister Martha. If her excellent work was brought before us in that most responsible part of the arrangements of the Motherhouse—the management, namely, of the large nursing establishment—we would equally honour in Sister Christine to-day the representative of the other part of the work—namely, that in the outside stations and in district work. Sister Christine has been engaged almost entirely in these outside duties.

The activities of Sister Dora and Sister Christiane we esteem equally with hers in the same department, and we would also remember the services of Sister Louisa, who has been our portress for so many years, and our trusted intermediary in our connections with the town.

So, my young Sisters, you see before you in these our honoured sisters the representatives of the work which you are intending to undertake.

You will be expected to further the work of the Red Cross both within the House and outside of it, and for that purpose you will take the vow and receive your diploma.

Our solemn and important ceremony to-day takes place in the presence of the assembled household; in the presence also of the officials who, in a wider sense, belong to the Motherhouse; it is celebrated also before our distinguished Central Committee and its noblehead, H.R.H. the Princess Ludwig, with the Royal members of our beloved Imperial House.

The ceremony of to-day gains also in importance and value in being honoured with the presence of many representatives of the Women's Associations of the Red Cross from the whole of Bavaria. On that account it becomes to us a kind of court of justice, a giving an account of ourselves to the delegates of the Associations, because one of the most essential and important objects of these Associations is fulfilled in the conditions of this House—the training, namely, and preparation of nursing sisters both for times of war and peace.

But to-day's ceremony is important from another

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point of view; it is ten years to-day since we entered into possession of the Motherhouse. Ten years ago to-day it was consecrated. We always connect, on that account, the house festival with the Sisters' Festival in May, and celebrate then the consecration.

Ten years ago to-day this building was devoted to its intended purpose, and commenced to fulfil its object of brotherly service and charity.

It was, and is, intended to be the Motherhouse of the Bavarian Sisters of the Red Cross, and to-day the outer building is completed in a magnificent way. From that time it has always been our practice to work at the inner as well as at the outer building, and to-day we especially render an account of the latter.

This inner building, to which the outer is indeed indispensable, but which is at the same time the kernel of the whole—this inner building is not apparent to the senses; it rises in silence, unnoticed, almost unobservable. I mean by this inner building all the inner organisations, instructions, and various rules for the service and course of life of the Sisters; the determination as to what is right and wrong for Red Cross Sisters; the arduous introduction and carrying out of measures for the education of the scholars and of their lessons; the carrying out of what I call the teaching influence and principle of the House; the arrangement of time for those studies; the accentuation of their importance, and of the importance specially of the medical lectures, and with them of the necessity of the scholars and the Sisters understanding also the practical theory of the same. But I am thinking also of the non-medical instruction as of equal importance, the introduction of lectures by the Matron, lectures which are to teach a profound conception of the profession from a religious and moral standpoint; which will emphasise the ethical foundation of the Sisters' work, and give the rod and staff to so difficult a profession; which will build up character; the spirit which will develop refinement of feeling, and broadness and nobleness of thought; which ever and ever again will speak and discourse on the deep love of souls which comes from the deep love of God.

But I am referring also to other instruction—that, namely, for the choir—which has been introduced into the Sisters' life, and also the teaching in general education which the Sisters are to attain in their profession. Ah! all who have to do with the affairs of Sisters know how far, far more seldom there is danger of there being lack of knowledge of the necessary capabilities and usefulness of a Sister than a lack of qualities of the heart and character.

Of this building up of the Sisterhood in a happy bond in days of health and of sickness, in all the various relationships into which the fortunes and life of men are led in joy and sorrow, in earnest care during the

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