

The Irish Nursing World.

We have all our preconceived ideas of Ireland, and who shall deny that the preconceived ideas of the Anglo-Saxon are occasionally lacking in that elasticity which springs from a fertile imagination?

"Dear, dirty Dublin." Someone said it, I don't know who, and on this side it will remain "dirty," if not "dear," until one pays it a visit, and has all one's preconceived notions swept entirely away as one realises that Dublin is a charming city, made up of streets of fine old mansions, with pretty green spacious gardens in the rear, squares and park-like gardens, clean streets traversed by a splendid system of electric cars, whirling one about the city with little loss of time; gay shops, picturesque canals, innumerable fine churches, stately grey-stone buildings, and bright brick suburbs in all directions, not to mention a Park which for unlimited space and natural beauty, with its exquisite greenness and flowery meads stretching away to the beautiful mountains of tender blue, has no rival in the world.

But during my week's visit to Dublin as the guest of the President of the Irish Nurses' Association there was but little time to enjoy the beauty and charms of this far-famed city. There are worlds within worlds, and it was the Irish nursing world I had come to see, and in a city of hospitals, as the Irish capital has been called, one can but get a glimpse of the varied and wonderful work they are doing in all directions in seven days. Two things, however, impressed me greatly in this connection—the exquisite cleanliness without exception maintained in every hospital I visited, and the beautiful neatness of the nurses, not only in the hospitals, but in the streets—the detailed attention to uniforms, both in and out of doors of the Irish nurses, is irrefutable evidence of the sound principles on which they are trained. It reminded me of the appearance of our London nurses in the eighties, when cleanliness and neatness of appearance were rightly considered testimony of an orderly mind, and before our Order was disgraced by the appearance in public places of women, presumably nurses of the sick, whose dirty and tousled appearance stamps them as totally unfitted for their responsible duties.

Each training-school has its distinctive in- and out-door uniform, and in many instances a badge is worn, embroidered on the cloak, as suitable nursing colours are few and schools are many.

In Dublin I met dozens of nurses in the streets daily, and it is a fact that I did not observe one of slovenly appearance; this is a highly creditable result of good discipline, and one of which the Matrons may be proud.

This pleasing cleanliness may be one of the

reasons, but, without flattery, it must be acknowledged that the Irish nurses have more than their share of beauty—a lovely freshness which age does not appear to diminish, bright eyes, white teeth, glossy hair, sprightly manners, intelligent expression, tuneful voices; it must be granted that the physical material is promising.

I must repeat that I was equally impressed with the order and cleanliness of the hospitals I had the pleasure of visiting, not only in the wards and operating-rooms, but waiting-rooms, halls, corridors, all appeared speckless and airy, and I merely mention this fact to prove what a blessing in disguise that microbe was which hopped into our hospital horizon at the close of the nineteenth century. How in the scientific war with him the habits of a people may be changed by training, and how in the attempt to exterminate him by the so-called aseptic system, great Mother Nature has triumphed, and her primary law, Order, has been established in hospital and home where the cure of disease is the ultimate aim.

One preconceived characteristic of the Irish, celebrated through the centuries, I found as pronounced as ever—unbounded hospitality to the guest within the gates. One quite blushes to remember with what healthy appetite the silvery slices of salmon, and delicate lambkin, spring chickens, frothy creams and salads, not to mention "teas," all delectable delight, disappeared; and when hospitality is offered with all kindness and courtesy the good feeling generated has far-reaching effects. There is nothing of "a cutlet for a cutlet" in Irish methods of entertaining. But to business.

THE IRISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

The Irish Nurses' Association has lately been formed, with headquarters in Dublin. By arrangement with Miss Margaret MacDonnell, two beautiful rooms on the first floor at her fine house in Lower Leeson Street have been secured for the Club. Here the Association, which already numbers the leading Irish Matrons and several hundred nurses amongst its members, meets for pleasure and business. A library has been started, where the medical, nursing and other papers are to be seen. Here meetings are held, the rooms being admirably adapted for the purpose, with platform at one end, and chair room for an audience of nearly two hundred.

It was at this nursing centre that Miss Huxley, the President, held an "At Home" the day after my arrival in Dublin, and where I had the great pleasure of making the acquaintance of many Matrons, Sisters, and nurses taking an active part in hospital work in the city. They struck me as being a wonderfully brisk and cheery community—sisterly and sympathetic—a pleasing result of the personal intercourse and membership of a central

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