

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

The Golden Rose.

The Queen of the Belgians has been presented at the Royal Palace of Laeken with the Golden Rose sent by the Pope in commemoration of her Majesty's silver wedding. This gift, which the Popes reserve for royalty, is a marvel of carving executed in the present case by an Italian artist. The delicate branches of a rose tree in bloom emerge from a gold vase.

The King's Speech.

Parliament has been prorogued until February 2nd. The King's Speech on the Prorogation to "My Lords and Members of the House of Commons," was read in both Houses and opened with the touching words:—"The grievous loss which I and My family have sustained by the death of My beloved Mother is first in My thoughts. It has been a solace to Me in My grief to have received from all conditions and classes, from all parts of My dominions and from all foreign countries, the touching assurances of their deep sympathy in My sorrow and the expression of their affectionate regard for One who was enthroned in the love of My people."

The Speech also stated:—"It was a source of great satisfaction to Me to welcome to London the distinguished Plenipotentiaries of Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, who, on December 1st, signed the diplomatic instruments initialled at Locarno on October 16th.

It is My belief and My earnest hope that these instruments by giving security to the peoples immediately concerned, will prove to be not only the foundation of a true peace between them but the beginning of a friendly co-operation which cannot fail to benefit the whole world.

I rejoice at the part which My Government was able to play in the negotiations leading up to this happy event."

A Conference on Disarmament.

The League of Nations has issued invitations to a number of smaller European States, as well as to Germany, and the United States, and Russia to attend the preparatory conference on disarmament.

Westminster Abbey the Spiritual Centre of the Empire.

At his installation as Dean of Westminster, Dr. William Foxley Norris, spoke of his aspiration that Westminster Abbey might become ever more and more the spiritual centre of the Empire, radiating Christian truth and practice to the uttermost bounds of the world.

Higher Moral Standards.

The Report of the Departmental Committee on Sexual offences against young Persons has been issued as a Parliamentary Paper (Cmd. 2561, price 2s.).

The Committee, of which Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C., is chairman, was appointed in July, 1924, to collect information and to take evidence as to the prevalence of sexual offences against young persons and to report on the subject indicating any direction in which, in their opinion, the law or its administration might be improved.

The raising the age of consent to 17 is proposed in the report, three members, including Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C. (the chairman), disagree with the recommendation. Numerous alterations are suggested for the protection of young persons in the administration of the law, and among preventive measures advocated is better supervision in parks, fairs, cinemas, and school precincts, and that student teachers should receive instruction at College as to the best methods of giving older children, individually, instruction on matters of sex.

This valuable report should be studied by all nurses engaged in Public Health Work. The sad results of the present prevalence of sexual offences committed against the young of both sexes is already well known to school nurses and others. The recommendation that the Children's Act, 1908, should be amended and incest added as an offence, will be ardently supported by all social workers who realise the terrible extent of this evil. As for our public parks, they have long been flagrantly abused by the indecent, and need strong measures of purification. The recommendation that there shall be women park-keepers is wise, and we hope to see it speedily adopted.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LATE QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

A London Hospital Matron.—"The editorial in the last issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING was the most touching article on the passing of Queen Alexandra which appeared in any paper. I took the liberty of posting copies to several members of the Royal Family."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

Mrs. Lystra Gretter, R.N., Detroit, U.S.A.—"The reports of the Congress of the International Council of Nurses in Helsingfors are excellent, and I shall want to preserve them; please find enclosed Post Office order for subscription to THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING for one year.

"I assure you we all appreciate very much the notable contributions you have made as Founder and as President of the Council, and also for the able and timely address you prepared for the Congress. We regretted that you were unable to be with us to deliver your message in person."

THE STATUTORY STANDARD FOR VILLAGE NURSES.

Queen's Nurse writes.—"Now that our great Institute (the best in the world) is to be associated with a memorial to the late Queen Alexandra, is it too much to hope that the Statutory Standard of Nursing, three years' training, State examination, and Registration should be the minimum standard for all nurses associated with it for the future?"

It appears very little use Parliament providing for efficient standards of knowledge, and legal status for nurses, if powerful organisations of nurses are permitted to ignore them. Now is the time to do away with poorly trained persons for the nursing of the sick poor in rural districts, and thus creating a class of worker unable to become members of the nursing profession though employed as such. It is not only unjust to the sick, but most unfair to the ignorant women encouraged to spend a life-time underselling their colleagues, the highly efficient Queen's Nurses, with very little benefit to themselves or the community. The true reason for the two grades has been economy; now if the rich are to further endow the Institute—as a Memorial to a greatly beloved Lady—let the Memorial be the very best for patients and Nurses. Please support this plea of one who writes with years of practical experience."

[We have expressed our considered opinion in our Editorial Article.—ED.]

PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR FEBRUARY.

Describe the after treatment and nursing of a case of prostatectomy.

Will competitors note that we shall not, for the future, award the prize more than twice in succession, there must be a month's interval.

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