

"Would you mind giving me a sketch, roughly, of the meals of an Italian Hospital?"

"Certainly, I will. Breakfast at 7.15 consists of coffee, which is boiled with the milk and sugar; with this the Italians prefer to have a hunch of bread, mostly without butter, for English patients we cut thin bread and butter. Dinner at twelve consists of soup containing often macaroni; then a portion of meat, with perhaps macaroni as a vegetable; if not, it will be prepared as a separate dish, and dressed with Parmesan cheese, which is the best for the purpose. When fruit follows, they prefer it in the natural state. At three, each has a cup of tea, very weak and containing plenty of milk; on Feast days, a glass of Italian weak wine is provided instead. The evening meal, between five and six, is in many respects a repetition of dinner. Later in the evening a drink of lemonade or milk is given to each. Of course this menu is varied considerably to meet individual necessities; but it is not often that the Doctor recommends us to put a patient on half diet, for many of the Italians who come here, are already ill, as the result more or less of insufficient nourishment."

"Do you not find it extremely difficult to keep the Hospital going; your funds often run short?"

"We are very proud of the fact," replied Sister Vincent, "that we are not a bit in debt, though our balance on the right side is somewhat small. The fact is, the whole hospital is conducted with great economy; there is no extravagance or needless expenditure, this was fully recognised by the Council of the Hospital Fund, who in consequence, awarded us a larger sum of money last year than fell to the lot of any hospital of a similar size, but more expensively conducted. It must be remembered, however, that the services of the Sisters of Charity are given gratuitously; certainly £10 is allowed for each of us, but this goes into the common purse of the Order to provide us with uniform and clothing."

"As there are only five Sisters, you must find the work very severe?"

"Our time is certainly very fully occupied. But we have given up our lives to the work, and find our greatest pleasure in it" she said simply. "The work is not so heavy as it may seem to those whose days are shorter than ours, for we get up every morning at four o'clock, and go to bed at nine p.m.; thus we have the best part of the day for work, and seven hours sleep is sufficient for anyone."

"One last question, please; is so much attention paid to the training of Nurses in Italy as in England?"

"No; not by any means. There are many Hospitals in Italy, but almost without exception the Nursing Staff belong to some Religious Order. No Nurse in Italy is expected to go through a special course of training as in English Hospitals, but the Sisters are never pressed into Nursing work against their will, or take it to as a means of livelihood; it is pure vocation. Experience and intuition is allowed to take the place of direct teaching. And it is wonderful," she concluded with a smile, the faith and confidence is reposed in the Sisters and in their advice. Again sight must not be lost of the fact that many who join the ranks of some religious order have been very well educated, which, combined with intelligence, anxiety to learn and pick up scraps of knowledge by the way, make up in some degree for the absence of a special course of technical training."

Outside the Gates.

WOMEN.

A NATIONAL APPEAL FROM WOMEN FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.



THE subject of Women's Suffrage is sometimes seriously misunderstood. Some people, on hearing it mentioned, say, "Oh! women in Parliament—horrible!" Now, women's suffrage does not mean women in Parliament; it merely means that women who are householders, landowners, or rate-payers should be allowed to vote in the election of members of Parliament as they already vote for county councillors, town councillors, members of school boards, boards of guardians, and so on. As the admission of women to vote for these local elections has been attended by much good and no harm whatever, it is believed that the admission of women to vote for members of Parliament would be attended by similar satisfactory results.

The good that has resulted from women voting in local elections may be seen, for example, in the increased care and attention bestowed upon the bringing up of pauper children; the adoption of the boarding-out system where practicable; the offering of scholarships and other educational advantages to girls as well as to boys in public elementary schools; the founding of classes for technical education in connection with the county councils, suitable for girls and young women as well as for boys and young men.

There are many practical questions affecting the interests of women which are constantly dealt with by Parliament, in which women suffer through the complete absence of women voters in the constituencies. If there were some women voters in every constituency, every member of Parliament would feel about each Bill that came before him—"I must consider how this Bill would affect the women as well as the men." Now, too often, the interests of women are completely forgotten. Four years ago, the Royal Commission on Education recommended the appointment of women school inspectors, but none have been appointed.

More than two-thirds of the operatives in the textile industries are women, but out of the army of factory inspectors, only two, appointed this year, are women. Women are employed in the civil service. They do their work excellently, and are paid from one-half to a third of what men are paid for the same work; but no Ministry dares very greatly to increase the number of women employed; men have votes and women have none. Parliament hardly ever deals with the industrial position of women except to endeavour to turn them out of some employment in which they are earning their living. The Trades Unionists are jealous of women's labour, and the Trades Unionists have votes and the women have none.

In view of these and many similar considerations, it has been felt that the time has come for a united effort

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