

At Charing Cross there is also a little Mortuary Chapel.

At one Hospital I was given to understand that the only Mortuary was the wash-house, an arrangement which strikes one as eminently inconvenient, to say nothing of its undesirability from a hygienic point of view. Let us hope that in the new Hospital which is in contemplation a more sanitary arrangement may be made.

At the new Hospital for Women in the Euston Road, a Hospital in which women presumably had a considerable voice in the arrangements, it jars upon one that the only mortuary provided is the *post-mortem* room. Doubtless, under Miss Cartwright's supervision, the best arrangements are made that are possible under the circumstances, but the fact remains that any relative who desires to see a body after it has been removed from the ward, sees it on the *post-mortem* table.

Those who are interested in the subject of Mortuary Chapels would be well repaid by a visit to the one which is provided by St. Alban's, Holborn, for its parishioners. At the east end is a beautiful black and white marble altar. In the black marble slab which forms the front panel is inlaid in white marble the Holy Name of Jesus, surrounded by a crown of thorns. Over the altar is a painting in which is depicted the Sacred Body of our Lord being laid to rest with reverent love by the Holy Women and Joseph of Arimathea. The centre of the Chapel is occupied by a bier, which, when a body is present, is surrounded by lighted candles typical of the immortality of the soul. For the rest no words of mine can describe the Chapel as do those which I quote, by the kind permission of the writer:—

"Those who have not lately paid a visit to the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre should not fail to do so, choosing an hour in the heart of the day, and a day when there is hope of sunshine. There is not much window space in the little Chapel, and the light that enters is still further reduced by the deep colouring of the glass.

The first thing that will strike the visitor is, that the whole Chapel has been re-decorated from roof to floor, and that the prevailing red is of a softer, warmer tone than heretofore. A pleasant, quiet glow, the glow of life, now fills and brightens the place.

But the most important feature is the new painting upon the West wall. The subject is the Holy Sepulchre, not as it now is, or in literal fact may have been, but as the sacred mystery presents itself in the dream of a devout mind. The rich man's tomb rises out of an English garden, standard roses surround it, their roots deep in the spring grass starred with daisies.

The daisies sleep with folded pink-tipped petals; and the roses—not white, but red, the colour of life—are in bud, buds just about to open in full bloom. At each end of the tomb tall trees of *arbor vitæ* (tree of life) stand sentinel. Upon the rock above two angels are sitting, watching patiently. They are bearing, the one a crown, the other a sceptre, the emblems of 'all power in heaven and earth.' Within the tomb, the Sacred Body of the Lord is lying wrapped in white linen; some angel has removed the napkin from His Head, a halo of pale light surrounds it, and above it hovers a tongue of fire, the symbol of the soul of Jesus returning from Paradise, to inhabit once more and for ever the Sacred Body. *It is the very moment before the dawn of Easter.* Behind the tomb great shafts of light are thrown up by the rising sun, which flushes the clouds rose-red, and gilds the summits of the tall trees.

Below the picture a ribbon, apparently of worn vellum, runs round three sides of the Chapel, bearing a legend from the Creed, 'I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.' The words begin with effort among thorns, but end in joy, for the thorns have blossomed.

To me the picture is just what a picture in such a place—a Chapel of the Dead—should be, profoundly reverent, solemn, peaceful, hopeful. It is beautiful in quiet colour, and full of dignity, and drawn with entire truth down to the least of the daisies in the grass.

The artist is Mr. C. W. Whall. To his skill and religious mind we are indebted for a real addition to the slowly gathering art treasures of the Church; yes, and for something more than this, for a message of peace and hope and comfort, which will, we trust, find its way into the troubled hearts of the many who bring their dead to rest awhile in our quiet Chapel.

The painting, and indeed the Chapel itself, is a Memorial to her parents and spiritual benefactors raised by one to whom St. Alban's owes much."

In conclusion, the following points present themselves. That the mortuaries are best cared for which are supervised by some member of the nursing staff.

That it is only natural and fitting that the mortuary arrangements, as well as other departments in our Hospitals, should be superintended by trained and educated women.

That until this is more universally the case the refinement and care which have been introduced into other departments by cultivated women will not prevail in our mortuaries.

That it is eminently a woman's work to accompany the friends of deceased patients to the Mortuary, and that this duty should not be left to porters.

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