

visit them again and again in order to thoroughly appreciate their wonderful beauty and delicacy. The Memling pictures are preserved in the former chapter house of the Hospital. When, at last, we tore ourselves reluctantly away from them, we went into the Hospital. In this Hospital of 240 beds we saw no one but the patients; at last we went back to the gate and enquired of the porter who we could see, as we wished to go over the Hospital. "*Les malades, eh bien, les voilà,*" he replied, waving his hands towards the wards. I replied that we wished for a guide, and asked if the Superior was visible. This seemed somewhat to scandalise him. He said it was quite impossible that we should see her, and re-iterated that the sick people were there and we could go and look at them if we liked. At last we waylaid a sister who was crossing the garden and she very kindly took us round the wards. There is a corridor running round three sides of a square, and the wards open on to this. Each bed is fitted with iron rods, on which are hung washing curtains, so that it is possible for each patient to be quite private. What seemed very odd to me was that by each patient's bedside was a bottle of medicine, well within his reach, and having no label of any sort or kind attached to it. In one ward we went into, I enquired what was the matter with the patients, and I was told "fevers, all sorts," but what sorts, precisely, I was unable to discover. The bath rooms are very nice, indeed, and the operating theatre was quite up-to-date and furnished with a glass operating table, glass cupboard for instruments, sterilizer, etc. There is a nice little chapel connected with the hospital. The patients are nursed entirely by the Sisters, but on the male side they have male assistants.

In a small street near the Hospital of St. John is the Musée des Hospices Civils. I gathered that all the Civil Hospitals in Bruges are under a Central Board of Management, and that the money paid in entrance fees at the Museum goes to their support.

The museum is well worth a visit as it contains many good pictures as well as curious old furniture, pottery, and so on. Near to the museum and adjoining the Hotel de Ville is the Palais de Justice, in the Court Room of which is a magnificent Renaissance Chimney Piece. The story told in Bruges as to its carving is a most pathetic one. The man whose work it is was convicted of murder. There is no capital punishment in Belgium, and so he was imprisoned for life. He told his jailor that if only they would let him have the tools he would carve something that would live in Bruges long after he was dead. Happily for the world the tools were supplied to him, and he carved this wonderful mantelpiece. It is not quite finished, for, when it was very nearly completed, news was brought to the prisoner that someone had confessed to the murder and he was free. He dropped down dead.

The Cathedral, and Notre Dame are both most interesting. In the former are many good pictures. The choir stalls are handsomely carved; they date from the year 1478. In Notre Dame the gem is undoubtedly a marble statue of the Virgin and Child, said to be by Michael Angelo. There seems to be no doubt the group was designed by the great master, though whether he carried out the design himself, or entrusted it to one of his pupils, is uncertain. One thing at least is certain, that it is of rare beauty. It is difficult to believe that anything so dimpled is chiselled out of marble. It is a picture to store away in the recesses of one's mind, and to bring out and enjoy again and again.

Perhaps the building in Bruges which is best known by hearsay is the Belfry, and certainly it is worthy of all admiration. It stands out magnificently in the Grande Place, and its melodious chimes add yet another to the many charms of Bruges. What would Bruges be without its Grande Place, one wonders? It seems to be the pivot upon which the life of the city turns. Here, in the early part of the day, twice a week, the market is held; and here again public rejoicings are held, while Jan Breidcl and Pieter de Coninc, the heroes of the Battle of Spurs look serenely down from their pedestal in the centre; here in the evening, the band plays while the citizens walk about the Place, and overflow from the Cafés and on to the pavements, and even on to the Place itself, tables and chairs being placed there for their accommodation. There are few pleasanter ways of ending a day than this, and one wonders as one listens to the excellent music, and watches the ever changing crowd, if we in England will ever take a lesson in innocent enjoyment. Will the day ever come, for instance, when we shall sip our chocolate or lemonade, or eat our dinner in Trafalgar Square, while a good military band discourses sweet music. Why not? M. B.

(To be continued.)

The Patriotism of Women.

It is reported that there are two hundred women serving in the Cuban army under General Gomez. These women wear a short skirt of brown linen, and a blouse, with high boots of tanned leather, their hats being ordinary broad-brimmed straw ones, with the flag of Cuba stuck in front. Most of them ride, and they are armed with machetes, which they carry at their sides, and with revolvers and cartridge belts.

SEVERAL women dressed as men have rendered distinguished service in the field. In the war of the American Revolution, Deborah Sampson disguised herself as a man, enlisted under the name of Robert Shirliffe, lived blamelessly, and fought like a hero for three years. She volunteered for several hazardous duties, was wounded on the head twice, and finally injured so severely that she was sent to the hospital delirious. There Surgeon Binney, of Philadelphia, discovered her secret, and had her removed to his home, but did not speak of his discovery even to the young soldier. When she was strong enough he sent her, still in the rôle of Robert Shirliffe, to Gen. Washington, with dispatches. She was in agony of mortification when she stood before Washington, after he had read the doctor's letter. But the General was as considerate as the surgeon. He merely praised young Shirliffe's bravery, and gave him honourable discharge from the Army. Deborah went home to Sharon and married. After the war, she was called to Philadelphia and received a pension for bravery on the field. The breaking out of the war between the United States and Spain has resulted in many curious demonstrations of patriotism on the part of the women of America. Just after the war was declared, for instance, a young woman of eighteen applied to the major of the 3rd Missouri Regiment for enlistment. She offered to disguise her sex, and stated she was willing to cut off her hair; in fact, do anything that the major might suggest to help her to get into the service; and it took some considerable time to convince the young patriot that such a course was impossible.

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