

wretchedly paid in life, should not at least enjoy the glory of fifty high masses and a monument. But women who devote themselves to public service are, in all lands, and under every régime, ancient or modern, gallantly exploited. It is a recognised duty to overwork them, underfeed them, and pay them next to nothing, and then expect gratitude from them for permitting them to waste their lives in the service of their ungrateful fellow-men. In mediæval times the town of Lyons decided to profit by the repentance of loose women, and ordered them to attend the sick for the good of their souls. They took no vows, but little by little they adopted a uniform, and in 1598 a meeting of Lyonnese doctors resolved that this lay order of sick nurses should be known as "servants of the poor." There is such a pretty mediæval twang about this name, that we salute it, still existing in these modern days, with respect. This lay order has existed throughout all the storms of French history, and works as well to-day as when it was founded four centuries ago. True, it is now recruited from quite a different class, and is divided into three terms of service—novices, pretendants, *sœurs croisées*, or decorated sisters. When a young girl wishes to become a 'servant of the poor,' she is severely catechized as to the reasons of her choice, is compelled to furnish proofs of her capacity for her chosen task, and the consent of her parents or guardians. Inquiries are made about her, and if she is accepted, her noviceship lasts a year, during which period she wears no uniform. Then she becomes a pretendant, and wears a uniform, receiving in payment of her incessant service the sum of eighty francs a year, out of which she must pay for her uniform and linen. She can leave when she likes, or the hospital committee can discharge her for any reason whatever. She obeys a superior nurse, who in turn obeys the administration, and her period of pretendance lasts from twelve to fifteen years. Imagine her, then, wishful of rest, far away from lint and bistouries and hospital odours. Her £3 4s. a year will not have afforded her much chance of putting anything by. But if, happily, her vocation for un-rewarded service lasts, she is decorated with a silver cross; and though she still takes no vows, and can leave when she wishes, she is regarded as having a life-claim upon the administration. They cannot now turn her into the streets, and there is no fear of her dying of hunger. In return for this assurance her salary is reduced to forty francs a year. But she is titled *Cheftaine*, with also its pretty ringing sound of the Middle Ages; she has seventeen days' holiday every year, and she has her silver cross and fifty low masses! There are eight hundred of these disinterested creatures in the City of Lyons; and it will be admitted that the great silk centre of France knows how to manage its affairs with prodigious economy.

THE OLD AND NEW REGIMES.

If you would obtain the most striking possible contrast of the hospital workings of the old and new régime, comparison should be made of the authentic plan of old hospital under the Kings of France, and the new hospital of the Institut Pasteur, under the directorship of M. Duclaux. Under the old system, patients, suffering from various maladies, all more or less contagious, lay four in one bed, two with their heads above, two with their heads below, the legs of the four touching. We may imagine the rest of the details in keeping with this frightful

situation; sanitary details not improved between the eight and eighteenth centuries, food, attendance of doctors, surgeons and nurses of the worst and coarsest kind, sickness not other than a filthy and hideous visitation of destiny, the inevitable precursor of the common ditch of burial. One wonders what degree of physical despair and disgust it was necessary to reach in those days to face the horrors of a public hospital. . . . Turn now to the latest public edifice for the poor under the Third Republic. The late Baroness de Hirsch, a Jewess, was one of the several founders—all of them women—of this splendid hospital attached to the Institut Pasteur. Here each patient has a room to himself free, on the raised ground-floor or on the story above. Below there are bath rooms and douches; there is a workshop for the carding of mattresses, each patient sleeping on a new mattress, each mattress passing through an immense sterilizer. To improve upon the old method, by which doctors and surgeons visit the patients at stated hours, a private house of handsome dimensions has been expressly built for the doctor, who must always be on the spot. In the case of contagious sickness there is the process of purification in the lower cells, while ordinary cases of illness are, after the consultation à la hâte, despatched to one of the bright, clean, little sick-rooms on the ground floor. Here the rooms are divided by glass partitions, which are muffed or not, as may be required. Grown patients are more likely to wish for the privacy of muffed glass panels, whereas it is preferable the panels should be transparent when the patients are children and need constant supervision. During convalescence, the patients, weary of solitude, can seek change by transportation to a public ward, and there is a long glass gallery, or winter garden, well located, and gay with green seats and tables, where they can walk up and down and receive their friends among the palms and indiarubber trees. This part of the establishment has more the air of a convalescent home than a public hospital. As deaths may occur even in the best regulated hospitals, there is a subterranean passage constructed for the *service des morts*, by which means the living are spared all contact with lugubrious eventualities. M. Duclaux calculates that the yearly expenditure of this admirable institution will reach £20,000.

ADA S. WACKRILL.

An Excellent Opportunity.

Miss Elma Smith, Matron of the Hendon Infirmary, who has personal friends in Buffalo, has most kindly interested herself in the question of accommodation for English nurses, who will attend the Congress in September, and may not be included in the provision made by the Committee for specially invited Delegates. Such Nurses will be interested to know that Dr. J. Grafton Jones will open his beautiful house at 473, Virginia Street, Buffalo, N.Y., to paying guests, and will be specially pleased to receive trained nurses. His house is capitally situated on the main line of cars, and the rates appear most moderate. Rooms according to size for each person 1 dol. (4s. 2d.) a day. Breakfast and lunch 50 cents (2s. 1d.). Dinner 75 cents (3s. 1½d.). This is a great opportunity, and those who require board and residence during the Congress should make arrangements at once if they wish to be received by Dr. Jones, who, in making these arrangements, we consider most kind and thoughtful.

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