

who had just graduated from the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Miss Baxter was born in Italy, of English parents, and grew up in Italy. Her coming to the Johns Hopkins was one of those unpremeditated acts which later appear so like destiny. At the very moment when she was prepared for it her work was ready for her, and she took it and has kept it to this day—the right person in the right place: a perfectly trained nurse, practical and sagacious, commanding the respect of the men and the devotion of her pupils.

In the beautiful old pink-and-yellow stuccoed General Hospital of Naples—one of the prettiest of all the cloister hospitals—she has built up a real training-school for nurses, the only thing of the kind to be found in Italy. The pupils are educated gentlewomen, and their earnestness is shown in the fact that they receive no compensation whatever from the hospital, but live entirely at their own expense, with the sole exception of a daily luncheon in the hospital. Their thorough teaching and genuine work are worthy of their teacher's Alma Mater.

Here, for the first time in Italy, one sees well-kept adult *patients*. Not only are the wards orderly and well managed, but the patients are cared for through and through, and this makes the contrast with other large hospitals most striking.

This school is now in its ninth year, has thirty-five graduates, twenty-five of whom are in active duty and very successful, and is firmly established in the appreciation of the medical staff. Beginning with one ward, it now nurses seven, and only those who have visited Italy can realise the patience and ability necessary to attain this result, which to us may seem small for such a length of time.

Signora Celli, in Rome, is also a trained nurse, having the diploma of the great General Hospital of Hamburg, one of the largest and most modern in Germany, where a most extensive and varied service is to be had, and where discipline and professional standards are very high. She has been married for some few years to Professor Angelo Celli, of Rome, who has done so much work in malaria, and who is now, as a member of the Italian Parliament, working for legislation to enforce methods of prophylaxis against malaria.

Madame Celli has assisted her husband in much of his work, going through the Roman Campagna, taking blood specimens and making counts, and noting the results of the "control" experiments. They are both ardent social reformers as well as thoroughly professional, and he is as much interested in her nursing questions as she is in his scientific work. In her opinion it will be possible to interest many young teachers, for whom there are now not enough positions, in nursing as a profession.

Madame Celli has also made extensive studies

of the conditions of the "nurse-servants," and has written articles on the same, from which I hope to quote later and which will show her opinions.

The condition of the children of the poorest classes also appeals strongly to them both, and Professor Celli has written a pamphlet describing the wretchedness of the peasants of the Campagna.

It will throw some light on the difficulties of the work before the Cellis to know that by conservative Italians of the older *régime* they are looked upon as dangerous innovators, only to be spoken of with bated breath.

Miss Tonino, one of Miss Baxter's graduates, and a most charming young Italian, full of intelligence and of a firm and courageous nature, has been working for five years in Rome in one of the large general hospitals, where nuns are in full charge.

She is permitted to train a class of her own pupils in these wards; but without proper facilities for teaching, without power to regulate work, without responsibility for the sick, and being there only, as it were, on sufferance, I must say the effort seemed to me quite hopeless. While at the outset this may have been the only way, it now seems impossible to make any further advance while so restricted. It is a clear case of new wine in old bottles. Until the nurses can have wards to themselves as Miss Baxter has, they will not be able to give the object-lesson or make the impression which could be made by a sharp contrast.

It will be seen, however, that the beginnings of a new order have been made in Italy, and one must wish it all success. The Italian nature is so lovable and the Italian heart so warm that these young women should be ideal nurses when education is added to their other gifts.

### The Asylum Workers' Association.

The annual meeting of the Asylum Workers' Association, founded in 1895 to improve the status of Asylum Nurses and Attendants, to provide for them Homes of Rest and Nursing, and to enlist public sympathy in their work, was held on Tuesday at the Medical Society's Rooms, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square. Sir James Crichton Browne, the retiring President, presided. The Presidency of the Association has been accepted by Sir John Batty Tuke, M.D., M.P. An interesting feature in the proceedings was the presentation of a gold medal to Mr. W. Headon, of the Devon County Asylum, and of three silver medals to Mr. T. Alexander, Notts City Asylum, Miss E. Atkins, Caterham Asylum, and Miss E. Gribble, Holloway Sanatorium, for long and meritorious nursing service. It is regrettable that the Report recorded a large falling-off in the number of ordinary members, due in part to the increase in the annual subscription from 1s. to 1s. 6d.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)