

never damped under the most trying circumstances, with that tact in the management of patients which is so essential to the well-being of a ward. We are sure that in India, as at St. Bartholomew's, you will gain great honour and the deep respect of all whose good fortune it may be to work with you, and we wish you God speed."

The briefest allusion must be made to her lovable nature, her sense of humour, her ability—always good naturedly exercised—as a caricaturist, her keen pleasure in life and in the beauties of Nature so that foreign travel was a delight to her.

On arrival in India in March, 1888, Miss Loch and five Sisters were ordered to Rawal Pindi. Of the lack of official status for the Sisters she wrote:—"I feel sure that in this horrid country nursing Sisters will never get a proper recognised position in spite of all the palaver of the military authorities. Of course we are everything that is delightful and revered and much thought of in conversation, but when it comes to the point we must be ministering angels, only without a definite responsibility or position of any sort or kind. . . . They manage things better in the Navy. Why must it be always thought that in connection with women things may be left vague and indefinite?" She got no help when the question was referred to headquarters, and wrote:—"It is very disheartening, and makes one feel as if one did not care what happened. Apparently, the last question had to go before the Duke of Cambridge, because it could not be decided in this country—viz., whether any nominal rank could be accorded to Nursing Sisters in this country. . . . All this is refused merely because H.R.H. 'has difficulty in believing that any soldier could fail in respect towards ladies who are devoting themselves, &c. &c.' so I suppose the civil ones will be civil, and the rude ones rude as heretofore."

And we learn from the letters she wrote home what certainly would never be gathered from her bearing when on duty—how keenly she felt the difficulties of her position when her official responsibility and official authority were not coincident, when those who had the power did not sufficiently consult those who had the knowledge, as, for instance, when a nurse was sent out to her to assume the serious responsibilities of an Indian Army Sister, whose training consisted of six months' work as Lady Pupil in an obstetric ward, or when a civilian of *two months'* experience was sent up to her for active duty, instead of an experienced member of the regular Nursing Service. In the latter case she refused point blank to carry out her official instructions, and waited to see what happened. She wrote home at that time. "All the Medical Officers are simply terrified at the idea of refusing to employ Miss P., when she has been sent by order from headquarters. I positively refuse to do so even nominally; so does the Deputy-Superintendent at Nowshera, who would hold out even if I did not. The first letter I wrote has been returned to me as being too defiant in tone. I have consented to word my letter in a less aggressive form, but I will not withdraw what I have said or consent to employ her. I have been considering seriously what to do. I am ready to resign on the

spot, but have come to the conclusion it will be more effectual to let them suspend me if they choose, which would necessitate a thorough inquiry and I could resign afterwards."

Miss Loch was not suspended, but only those who have struggled to maintain educational standards, to secure to the sick the skilled care which is their due, and to maintain the status of members of a nursing staff, because without it inefficiency and lack of discipline must ensue, can judge how such episodes tried her. It is not surprising that with the depressing effect of a tropical climate added to the trials of her position, she had her moments of despondency when she was tempted to give up her work. Even her intrepid spirit occasionally failed her. But she turned once more to face and surmount the difficulties which confronted her, and to leave things better for her successors, and right nobly she succeeded. The traditions she has left behind her are traditions of which the Service she superintended may be proud, and will do well to cherish. General Bradshaw says in his preface to the book, which is dedicated to Members of Queen Alexandra's Military Nursing Service for India:—"By her administrative ability, strikingly sound and tactful common sense, and by her decisive and level-headed judgment in complex and trying circumstances, she had obtained the high esteem of the medical authorities with whom she was brought into communication. Undoubtedly, under a less able and less judicious pioneer the Indian Nursing Service could not have achieved the marked success which justified the Government of India in adding to the personnel and in extending the areas of usefulness."

In 1891 Miss Loch with two Sisters recommended by her received the Royal Red Cross for their services in connection with the Black Mountain Expedition, an honour which she greatly appreciated. In 1899 when in England she underwent a serious operation in St. Thomas's Hospital. She returned to India, but in 1901 had a stroke of paralysis, and the following year came home for the last time.

On her return Miss Loch was formally offered a seat on a Board at the India Office, meeting four times a year for choosing candidates for India. Of this appointment her sister wrote: "Cathy was immensely pleased and gratified at being asked to fill this post, and I think in a way it prolonged her life, for it quite broke her heart when she had to resign her own work, and the Service, and this appointment gave her a little hold on the former life and interest, and was really the only interest she had the last year of her life."

The Appendix includes several interesting papers written by Miss Loch, reprinted from the *Nursing Record* (now the *BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING*), an important one being that contributed to the Nursing Conference held in London in 1896 on the Indian Army Nursing Service.

What more welcome gift could a nurse receive for her private library than the story of this noble woman and her work for the soldiers of our Indian Empire. Her devotion and the manner in which she performed her duty have left an example which should be an inspiration to all.

M. B.

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