

Our Foreign Letter.

A RED CROSS SCHOOL IN ROME.

Another event of interest in the nursing world in Italy is the formation of a School for Red Cross Nurses in Rome. It is curious to remark that, in exact contrast to the Garibaldi enterprise (which has been created and carried out by a woman's initiative), the Red Cross School is organised, and will be carried out by, almost exclusively, the wonderful Latin man—the doctor! When Professor Postempski, who is the chief promulgator and Vice-President of the Roman Red Cross branch, was asked "who would teach the practical part of nursing to the lady pupils?" "The military doctors," was his prompt reply.

It will be interesting to follow up the progress of both these undertakings, and in a few months to report on them again.

Ever since the Russo-Japanese war Italy has been making efforts to put her Red Cross Associations on a more practical footing, so as to secure some measure of efficiency should need of nursing arise. Unlike England, where highly trained military hospital Sisters can be drawn on to an almost unlimited extent by Ambulance authorities, we in Italy have *no* women nurses trained in the nursing of men. Nuns only supervise in male wards; male servant nurses doing the actual assistance of men in hospitals (with very few exceptions, which will be mentioned in a future article on hospital reform in Italy). It is, therefore, a sign of progress that a course of instruction is now opened to *lady members* of the Red Cross, and some practical experience in the military hospital is also offered them.

On many street corners the following placard was affixed a few days ago, whilst a similar circular was sent to almost every householder in Rome:

ITALIAN RED CROSS.

Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War.

Roman Committee.

TO ITALIAN WOMEN.

A school for Red Cross lady nurses has been founded by the Roman Committee under the patronage of H.M. Queen Elena.

Similar institutions already exist in other nations where sentiments of charity, which form also a characteristic of Italian women, have known how to organise and carry out intelligently this initiative.

Recent wars and public calamities point to us the way to follow in this philanthropic, difficult, and delicate undertaking.

The example given by many women, and especially by Russian women, on the battlefield of the east, deepens our faith in the hearts of women in the mournful but glorious vicinity of war.

The episodes in that competition in abnegation, courage, faith, and infinite charity, gave rise to a world-wide hymn of praise to the imperishable glory of the volunteer nurses.

How many mothers, wives, and sisters, deprived of their dear ones, were consoled by the thought that, besides the usual official assistance, the

wounded could count on other kindly ministrations, and in their pain and homesickness could depend on devoted intelligent care, counsel, and comfort.

Our army confides in the affection you nourish for her, and for the Mother Country; confides in you, convinced that your loving cares will be the best of medicine.

Show once again that Italian women, as well as men, know how to suffer and even to die when it be necessary; show that this new army of sisters of charity knows how to attain the same altitude of courage as their sons, husbands, brothers.

It is in this certainty that our women wish to follow the example given by those of other countries, that the Roman Red Cross Association invites them to follow the courses of instruction of this School.

The knowledge which you will thus acquire will also render you useful in case of need in your homes, and in observing rules of hygiene.

The School will be held in the military hospital, thanks to the kind permission of the Minister of War. The lessons will be essentially practical; and all the materials employed will be suitable for the object for which they will eventually be used.

The School will be inaugurated on the 2nd February, the lessons taking place every successive Sunday and Thursday, from 3 to 4 p.m.

The matter taught will be divided into four courses.

Course I. (Doctor Bisso).—(a) Notions of anatomy and physiology. (b) Materials for dressings. (c) The most commonly used surgical apparatus and instruments.

Course II. (Professor Memmo).—(a) Notions on bacteriology. (b) The most common medical and surgical diseases. (c) Asepsis and antiseptic.

Course III. (Doctor Riva).—(a) Operating and dressing rooms. (b) Various forms of sanitary arrangements in war. (c) General nursing of the sick in different places of treatment.

Course IV. (Doctor Bonaventura).—(a) Wounds and fractures in war. (b) Their treatment. (c) First aid in war and in peace.

The theoretical course will last for four months, the practical course for one month.

A final examination will give the right to the diploma of the Red Cross nurse, and to a medal with the emblem of the Geneva Convention, and the name of the *diplomée*.

All they who pass the examination will be MORALLY obliged to hold themselves in readiness to obey any call in case of "mobilisation" of the Italian Red Cross.

As the month of practical instruction is not to take place till June, there will still be time for useful suggestions from Red Cross lady nurses already trained, and with active experience. These lectures are open to all foreign Red Cross nurses, and probably an English lady (who helped the Japanese), and a Russian lady (who worked through the whole war, and was constantly at the front or on ambulance trains) will attend them, and—let us hope—be permitted to aid in the last month's practical demonstrations of nursing.

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