

Nurses of Note.

MADAME LEVI NORSA.

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Nothing seems more natural than that the Israëlite community of Alexandria should have a hospital of their own, for the simple reason that every nation, religion, and creed in that city supports its own. The Germans, for instance, have two—one Protestant nursed by the Kaiserswerth deaconesses, and one Roman Catholic nursed by a Sisterhood, the latter being mainly for chronic cases. Notwithstanding my varied knowledge of hospitals, in many parts of the world, and of all nationalities in the ports of the Mediterranean Sea, I had never yet had the opportunity of visiting an Israëlite hospital.

I clapped my hands with joy when my friends suggested my visiting Baron Menasce's Hospital. It was all done in a few minutes. My friends telephoned through to the Baron, who was *enchanté*; he in his turn telephoned to the *Directrice*, who was equally *enchantée*. The carriage was ordered, the Circassian servant, armed to the teeth (my friend is a Russian Princess) mounted the box, and in a few moments we were at the gates of the *Hôpital Israélite, fondé par le Baron Behor Menasce*.

How strange it seemed to be back in the East! The brilliant everlasting sunshine, the palm trees and camels, the marble stairs, the black, brown, and white servants about one, some in their gorgeous coloured gold embroidered liveries, others slouching about with bare, brown feet, down-trodden slippers, cotton garments and aprons which they never seem to take off. There seems no intermediate stage; it would have been out of place to have the gold embroidered man in a hospital; there was no other alternative but the other kind, and therefore a man as black as coal, consequently a Mohamedan, clean as a

jasmine, clip-clapped to us in his turned-down shoes, and received us in the sweetest little den of a sitting-room imaginable. It was full of everything; it had a *cachet* of its own; it was distinctly original.

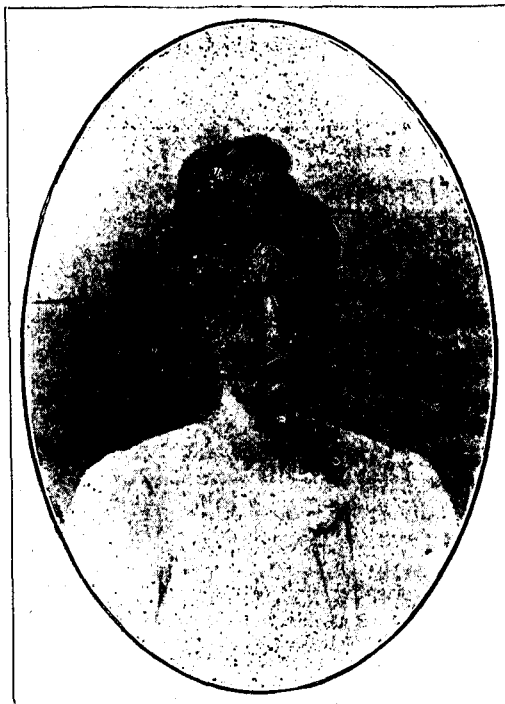
We were standing, looking round us, when a handsome, dark woman entered, dressed in a spotless, white English uniform. If I were to describe her as a refreshing woman, I should fail in conveying to you the feeling she imparted to us, for she was distinctly bracing. Her black eyes, her regular features, her stature and physique at once indicated a remarkable woman, a strong mind, and a strong body—a woman capable of organising a disbanded army.

"You have come from the Baron," she said, in faultless English, "I suppose you imagine that I am like an English Matron? Matron!" she said, laughing and showing a beautiful set of teeth. "I am everything! Do you know what the patients tell me sometimes? What are you here but the paid servant of the poor. And this is what I am." It was impossible not to laugh. She was so delightful, so charming.

"I suppose you trained at the London Hospital," I suggested.

"I have seen the London Hospital, but that is all," she replied. "Do you take me for an English trained nurse? I only wish I were. I have had no training. All I know is what the doctors have taught me here. I am a widow and a grandmother (she looks about 35). I have been nursing for eight years, and I have been here for six. Everybody thought I was mad when I took up nursing after my husband's death; it is considered a shame for a woman to work here, but I simply love this work; for me it is as great a pleasure as sport for other women."

Who could help admiring such a woman? She had broken through and overcome all the customs, habits, and traditions of her people. She had worked hard by day and by night. Her holidays and money she had spent in



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