

that, according to the elections of the Town Council, the hospital will be managed by the Clerical or by the Republican party.

Hospital Matrons in France find themselves in a very awkward situation; they are served by a staff who dislike being under a woman's orders—some through a spirit of anti-feminism, others simply because they think that an honest woman who supervises and sees everything is sometimes very much in the way.

Our certificated nurses who go into the different hospitals need a great deal of courage and grit to go on fighting in spite of all; a great deal of tact and forethought when they become *directrices*, for they have to bear heavy responsibilities, and are more often blamed than praised.

The hospital patients are in every case their first champions, for the care they receive is the strongest argument in favour of lay nurses.

So we are justified in hoping that the influence of our training schools will be felt throughout France, not only because founded on Florence Nightingale's principles, but also because they are founded on the same practical lines as the wonderful London schools, the representatives of which we have the joy and honour of meeting here to-day.

Our Foreign Letter.

INFERMIERI E INFERMIERE: L'ASSISTENZA AI MALATI IN ITALIA, FRANCIA, E INGHILTERRA.

It is time to continue the relation of events in the Italian nursing world.

First and foremost amongst them in importance probably has been the landing on the sea of publicity a book which promises to become a classic in Italian nursing literature, as has Dr. Anna Hamilton's famous thesis in that of France.

The author of this courageous work, Professor Umberto Baccarani, is director (*di facto*, male Matron) of the General Municipal Hospital at Ancona. Its title is "Infermieri e Infermiere: l'Assistenza ai Malati in Italia, Francia, e Inghilterra" (Nurses, Male and Female: Nursing in Italy, France, and England); and whilst the International Congress of Nurses was running its brilliant course in London, one of the Italian daily papers wrote an article which drew the attention of the Roman Committee for the Nursing School to this book.

On its perusal we found that its contents surpassed our expectations. This Professor—entirely unknown to us—stated openly in it all that we had been trying for years to get said. As hospital Director and physician, he spoke with an authority which no nurse (of whatever position) could ever equal; whilst the fact that Professor Baccarani had never even heard of the "Croce Azzurra," and only knew vaguely that a Committee in Rome was attempting something regarding nurses, proved that his utterances were absolutely spontaneous and indigenous—not the result of "foreign influence," but actual perceptions and convictions of an independent authority regarding what nursing is in Italy, in France, and in England,

with his carefully studied reasonings as to what nursing *should be in itself*.

Miss Baxter's comment on this book was: "I have read it at one sitting. Splendid Gospel truth it is! Thank you for telling me of it."

We have spread it amongst our friends and sympathisers out here, and the future staff for our school at the Policlinic will study it as soon as their knowledge of Italian shall suffice. Meanwhile a few extracts will follow appropriately on my Congress report; an Italian doctor being able to say openly what an Anglo-Italian nurse can only hint at.

The preface commences with the quiet assertion that "the problem of nursing the sick deserves the careful study of our hospital Administrations: it is urgently necessary that this most important service should be carried out on more modern lines.

"It must be clearly stated that in our hospitals patients are very insufficiently cared for. The thought of hospital wakens in our people visions of a sad absence of kindly attentions and absolute indifference on the part of the staff. I know of many very poor people who have chosen to die in their miserable homes—where their families assisted them compassionately—rather than have recourse to the hospital, 'abandoned by everyone, without ever hearing a word of comfort or of hope.' If the majority of those patients who recover in hospital take away no happy memories, it is mainly due to the bad nursing they received there.

"The good name of a hospital depends on various causes, but the quality of the nursing stands first amongst them. The proverbial reputation which English hospitals enjoy is due to the intelligent nursing given in them. (Sta tutta nella intelligente assistenza medica praticata dalle nurses.)"

Two points are especially interesting in these sentences. A Latin doctor, head of a hospital, states publicly his conviction that *nursing* is what most appeals to patients. And he uses the word nurse (not even in italics) instead of *infermiere*.

For years we have been repeating that those who take away good memories from the hospitals are usually those who were important cases, and have been literally nursed by the assistant doctors or surgeons. Italians continue to put up with the unsatisfactory assistance given by the *infermiere* largely because of the remarkable nurse-qualities possessed—and exercised—by the doctors. But . . . alas for the uninteresting hospital cases! it is the thought of them which holds us to our propaganda, until we obtain for all patients alike the care proportionate to their need.

For years, too, we have been saying that the words "chic," "sport," etc., are used by every nationality, viewing the impossibility of finding their exact equivalent in other tongues, so should the word nurse be universally applied to those who attend the sick, on account of its untranslatable meaning of gentle, intelligent, and persistent care. Dr. Anna Hamilton has already adopted this word—spelling it "neurse" so as to secure the English pronunciation—and now this unknown (to us) Italian Professor uses the word instinctively and intentionally—instinctively because he could find

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