

## Nursing in Rome.

### TWO VISITS FROM QUEEN ELENA.

The first was a solemn affair. Her Majesty had promised to come and pronounce the School which bore her name to be open. She had expressed the wish that as little ceremony as possible should be observed, so only the members of the Committee and the Hospital authorities were told of the day and hour fixed; but the "hospital authorities" alone made up a goodly number, as in Rome there is one Administration over all the public hospitals—*gli Ospedali riuniti*.

We of the School had a very amusing evening previously, reciting the Court curtesy, the mistress of the ceremonies being Miss Clay, Miss Snell acting Queen. Italian girls are naturally graceful, however, and the right movements were quickly acquired.

Two days before several large cases arrived containing 18 engravings in pretty brown frames, and a charming photo of her Majesty, under which she had written in her clear, graceful handwriting, "*Alla Scuola Convitto professionale 'Regina Elena' per infermiere.—Elena.*"

The engravings were all English; amongst them the world-famed picture of Luke Fildes, "The Doctor," and the less known, but also appropriate, "The Good Samaritan" (in top hat and frock coat) of W. Small.

There likewise arrived a cartload of magnificent plants, palms, rhododendrons, azaleas, etc., and on the morning of her visit large baskets of lovely cut flowers.

The hour chosen was ten, as being the one most convenient for patients and nurses. The Queen had expressed her readiness to come at nine if that hour had been thought better.

Princess Doria and Madame Maraini met her Majesty outside, and accompanied her, the Hospital authorities following, to the Convitto, where the night staff, with Miss Snell, Miss Clay, and myself awaited her in the entrance hall. She gave her hand to each of us, speaking in French, and receiving a bouquet of exquisite flowers—companion bunch to one Princess Doria presented to Miss Snell—from Signorina di Nicola, our youngest probationer.

The sitting rooms were first visited, and in the office of the Direttrice, her Majesty wrote her name in a little book, "*Liber aegrotum amicorum*"—book of the friends of the sick.

Next the corridors were visited, containing bedrooms of all the staff. The rooms are all

cream-coloured with pale green borders, the furniture all enamelled white, bed-quilts "Barker's" chintz, very bright and cheerful. The variety of taste displayed in the individual arrangements and possessions was of interest to her Majesty. She often said, "*C'est charmant; comme c'est jolie cette petite cham-*



Miss Snell and Miss Turton with Night Probationers.

bre," and noticed especially a water colour sketch done by the grandfather of a half Dutch pupil who had painted war pictures in King Emanuel's time.

In Miss Snell's bedroom, the Queen was charmed with its harmonies, but looking round, remarked, "*Il n'y a pas de fauteuil confortable.*" This happened indeed to be missing, the right article not having been obtainable.

Finally, Queen Elena walked into the kitchen, and straight up to our good Anna, asking what she was cooking, and looking at the cutlets she displayed. In recounting the incident Anna wept with emotion at the condescension and kindness of her Queen.

Shortly after a note came asking us to choose from some patterns enclosed the green which would harmonise with Miss Snell's room. This

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