

The Matrons' Procession then passed away and Science appealed again to Hygeia:

"Hear those who follow, and thou shalt judge, Goddess, if the people need thy servants."

PROCESSION OF NURSES.

Permission having been granted, the Procession of Nurses, preceded by the Banner "Nursing and the Community," and led by Miss Cox-Davies, passed up the Hall. Next came the bannerettes of the sixteen Leagues and Societies affiliated to the National Council of Nurses, specially made for the occasion. Some of them in beautiful colouring, and exquisite needlework were extremely fine.

There followed an interesting section, "Lay Nurses of the Past," headed by Edina de Rittle, who lived in the 13th Century, and whose appointment is recorded at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. A Sister of Rahere Ward in 1850 and a Ward Sister and a Nurse in 1870 were excellently represented. Also a nurse of St. John's House in its early days, in the cross-over shawl and neat bonnet worn at that period. Then came Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig, who were quite inimitable.

Next in order were groups of nurses representing the different branches of nursing—hospital nursing, maternity nursing, in which the nurse was attired in a midwifery overall, and a maternity nurse, both carrying babies, gained great admiration. Social Service Nursing was shown by nurses representing Babies' Welcomes, School Nurses, and District Nurses, wearing the letters "S.S." embroidered in white, on blue ribbon brassards.

Private Nursing was represented by nurses from St. John's House, and the Registered Nurses' Society, and Nursing Homes, by Miss L. M. Stower.

In the Mission Nursing Section a nurse in a beautiful silk embroidered Chinese dress, and another in native Indian dress, showed that the work of nurses extends over seas. Mental Nursing was represented by a Sister and Nurse from St. Luke's Hospital, E.C., and then attention was drawn to the fact that no less than eight Government Departments utilise the services of trained nurses.

In this section were two bannerettes, one bearing the name of Agnes Jones, pioneer in workhouse nursing reform, carried by Miss Marquardt, the other that of Catherine Loch, R.R.C., the first Lady Superintendent of the Indian Army Nursing Service, carried by Mrs. Maxwell St. John, R.R.C.

The Matrons, Sisters, and Nurses in this Section all wore rosettes of the national colours.

Arrived before Hygeia the Procession paused until the Goddess decreed:

"Come forward; I will hearken to your Petition."

Miss Cox-Davies then ascended the platform and presented the following Petition:—

PETITION ON NURSING AND THE COMMUNITY.

"GREAT GODDESS OF HEALTH,

"Thy Empire is worldwide, but thy rebels are everywhere to seek. We are those who fight them by day, and who do not rest by night. For the sick are scattered up and down the world, and those who are broken in earth's hard battles lie where they fall, and it is our duty to seek them where they lie; it is our high toil to minister to them.

"We have heard what our elder sisters have said, hearken to them, Goddess, for the fight is stern, and our weapons must be well forged if we are to prevail.

"We come from the Hospitals, where they dream great dreams of the future of science and her dominion over pain, from the camp, where brave men make light of suffering, from where the cheery sea-fighters rest unwillingly and dream of their ships; from the houses of rest for the poor, from where those unhappy ones are gathered who have lost the knowledge of things as they are, for the vision of things as they seem, and from the sombre houses of silence, where those who have transgressed the laws of the Realm greatly need our ministrations. We come from those Hospitals where lie the saddest victims of man's folly and ignorance, the children, who suffer and die for crimes that were not theirs, and of diseases that were the cruel gift of those who loved them; we come from the schools where we help those unhappy little ones borne down in their earliest struggles with the world, by the burdens that others have laid on them.

"We come from the Hostels where fever raves, from the moorlands and country lanes where the sick are scattered far apart, from the crowded towns, where they lie cramped and close packed in mean homes, or in lofty rooms in rich and stately houses encompassed with all the comfort and skill that wealth can buy. We come from the far lands where fever, plague, and cholera slay under a tropic sky.

"O Great One, wherever they know not thy laws, wherever they break thy laws, wherever the fight is too hard and men faint and fail, there is our place, and from thence we have come to cry to thee. To cry to thee, so that what we lack to fit us for our heavy task may not fail those who follow us.

"Let Science help them, that they have a more perfect understanding of thy laws and how best to teach them to others, and let Science grant them the knowledge that gives

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)