

The Hospital World.

THE ITALIAN HOSPITAL.

It was a happy choice to arrange the opening of the new wing of the Italian Hospital, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, for January 7th, the birthday of her Majesty Queen Elena, Queen of Italy, whose warm interest in nursing is well known, and after whom the new block, generously given by Mrs. Angiola Ortelli, in completion of the work begun by her husband, Commendatore Ortelli, is named. The hospital looked very festive on Saturday, for the Christmas decorations had been kept up and others added.

His Excellency the Italian Ambassador, who performed the opening ceremony, and the Marchesa Imperiali were received by his Italian Majesty's Consul General, the Chairman, General Sir J. Ramsay Slade, K.C.B., R.A.; the Vice-Chairman, Lord Edmund Talbot, M.P., D.S.O.; Mrs. Angiola Ortelli, Mr. Roberto Reitmeyer, the Hon. Secretary, and Dr. F. G. Melandri, senior physician.

The Committee of Management, the staff, the Sister Superior, and the Architect, were then presented to their Excellencies, and after the presentation of a bouquet by Miss Bianconi their Excellencies were conducted to the Reception Hall, passing through lines of Italian children from the Italian School, the band meanwhile playing the Italian National Hymn.

The Chairman then welcomed the Ambassador to the hospital, and an address was presented to his Excellency in the name of the Governors, Committee, and staff, as the representative of their beloved King, who, with her Majesty, Queen Elena, "has ever most royally personified the cardinal virtue—Charity. . . . Their Majesties' deep practical interest in suffering humanity has been prominently before the world time after time, and has won for them the respectful admiration of all people." The Committee begged that, as a perpetual memorial to future generations, her Majesty would permit the new building to be named after her, and known as "The Queen Elena Block."

Mrs. Ortelli then presented to his Excellency the deeds of the new building, who handed them to the Senior Trustee, after which the Consul-General thanked the Ambassador for his presence, and Mrs. Ortelli for her gift, and requested him to declare the new building open.

This he did, expressing the gratitude of the whole Italian colony to Mrs. Ortelli for her generous gift, and to the English supporters of the hospital, whose action, he said, had

strengthened the bond of friendship which had existed between the two countries since Italy became a nation fifty years ago. His Excellency, amidst much enthusiasm, read a telegram from the Minister to the Royal House of Italy stating that her Majesty, wishing to give a new proof of her great interest in the munificent Italian foundation, gave permission for the new wing to be called "Riparto Regina Elena," and these words, illuminated by electric lights, appeared over the door of the new block. His Excellency then touched an electric button, and on the connecting door being released declared the new block open.

The block contains, besides a laundry in the basement, an extension of the out-patient department, a delightful dispensary, and a spacious ophthalmic department. On the first floor is an isolation ward, with bath room and annexes, with Assistant Nurses' quarters; and on the second floor a fine operating theatre with tessellated floor, and dado, laid with that perfection of touch which seems the exclusive possession of the Italian workman. The theatre is flooded with light through a great window looking north, as well as a glass roof.

The third floor provides accommodation much needed for the domestic staff, and there is a flat roof which can be used for open air treatment.

The hospital itself is an interesting building, the Board Room containing signed portraits of the King and Queen of Italy, and of their predecessors.

The wards, where English as well as Italian patients are received, are nursed by sweet-faced Sisters of the Order of St. Vincent de Paul, of fragrant memory, in large white aprons, white linen sleeves, and picturesque caps, assisted by a few lay nurses. Some of the children were happily engaged playing with the coloured air-balls familiar to those who know the Italian quarter; others were acutely ill. One man, sitting happily by the fireside, had had a large malignant growth on the side of the face, which had responded to treatment by radium, of which two tubes had been applied, the value of each being £1,600. It was thought advisable not to inform the patient that his "face was his fortune."

The large wards have a pleasant outlook over Queen Square, remarkable for the number of hospitals which surround it, including the National Hospital, the Alexandra Hospital, and the new buildings of the London Homoeopathic Hospital. St. John's House is also now domiciled in the Square, and the Medical Examination Hall will be its next door neighbour.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)