

As I gazed, the woman's figure vanished from view, and in spirit I went with her into the silent, darkened ward.

Could it have been imagination or did I really hear a fluttering of wings as she entered? Did death and disease, like foul bats, leave their evil work and flee at this woman's approach?

Silently I followed her from cot to cot, and watched her as with gentle hands she tended the suffering ones, smoothing a ruffled pillow here and reversing it under a burning cheek, or placing a cool palm upon some fevered brow.

Here, too, I found the same silent watching as I followed my soft-footed guide. Sleep had come to some few, but in the main they lay awake, gazing into vacancy.

Had they also heard the flutter of wings, and seen those dark spirits at their fell work? The dim light was reflected in many a watching eye.

I was reminded of a great silent camp. The nurse, a solitary sentry, kept guard over comrades lying around. Many of these lay awake, the light of the camp fire glinting in their eyes.

Was it a presage of coming death that banished sleep from the weary lids?

Each great ward was silent, save for a murmur or weary sigh from those who battled with invisible foes. Each had its sentinel, alert to guard against surprise or sudden attack.

Again I seemed to hear the whirl of wings. My guide passed to a bed upon which lay one very nigh the end. The evil things, sure of their prey, did not fear her coming then, but finished their work.

Weary and saddened at last by such scenes I turned, and, for the first time, studied my guide.

Brave soul, so young and fair, to pass long hours in such dread company, alert and unafraid. I wonder can you hear, above that sinister fluttering, the sounds of angel wings, banishing your fears?

Prostrate, suffering forms, sickness, disease, and death—all that men most dread—about you, do you not fear their dreadful presence?

While men sleep in their beds, forgetful of the terrors you are witnessing, you keep your heroic watch and guard, alone in the quiet and darkness of the night.

A squall of wind and rain, more violent than most, struck me, and, remembering my position, I too went home, but not to sleep. Memories of what I had seen, and thoughts of the many brave women who kept guard against such unseen foes, banished slumber from me.

ALLAN JAMES ELPHINSTONE.

REFLECTIONS.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

The cot in the children's ward of the West London Hospital, endowed by a fund raised by the Mayor of Hammersmith, Councillor F. Mayle, will, by permission of the King, be known as the "King Edward VII. Memorial Cot." His Majesty has also granted permission for the surmounting with the Royal Arms of the tablet which will be placed over the cot.

The treasurers of the Middlesex Hospital have received from Lord Howard de Walden his annual subscription of £300.

The Duchess of Westminster at Chester on the 19th inst., laid the memorial-stone of two new wings which form an important part of the great scheme for the renovation and extension of Chester General Infirmary as a memorial of King Edward. Mr. Albert Wood, of Bodlondob, Conway, North Wales, an old friend of the Infirmary, gave a donation of £12,000 for the two wings. The complete scheme will, it is estimated, involve an outlay of about £40,500. Towards this about £28,000 already has been subscribed.

The Duchess, with Countess Grosvenor, was received by the Chairman (Mr. J. R. Thomson), members of the Board of Management, the Lady Superintendent (Miss E. K. Blayney), and some of the nursing staff.

After the ceremony and tea, which was served in the old Hall, the Duchess went round the different wards, and spoke to each patient. She was particularly interested in the Children's Ward, when one small boy was heard to call out, "Hey, Missus, give us your feather!"

Dr. Elliott (the Senior Physician), in his speech, gave an interesting account of two of the nurses of 120 years ago, who nursed typhus fever in the top ward of the present building, in the year 1783. One nurse, named Lowry Thomas, had typhus fever five times; and in the fifth attack, she died in the ward, in the year 1795. The other nurse, named Jane Bird, had typhus fever twice.

Dr. Elliott hoped that when those wards were restored, they should be called after those two brave women, who freely gave their lives in order to relieve human suffering.

The State Sickness Insurance Committee of the British Medical Association have resolved that the resignations of contract practice appointments, in so far as they extend to insured persons, shall be sent in on or before September 29th.

Dr. D. G. Macintosh, Medical Superintendent of the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, was elected at Birmingham, Chairman for the ensuing year, of the British Hospitals' Association. Mr. Conrad W. Thies succeeded Dr. Macintosh, as hon. secretary. The recent meeting in the midlands was a great success.

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