

NURSES OF NOTE.

SISTER CAROLINE WIDSTRÖM.

We are indebted to the editor of the Swedish Nurses' Journal for the accompanying portrait of Sister Caroline Widström, who has just resigned the Matronship of the Serafimer Hospital, Stockholm, after having held the post for a term of twenty-seven years. Referring to her work, the same journal says that, as one of the pioneers of modern nursing, she has had many rich experiences, and a reminiscence of her life comes to be, to a great extent, a study in the history of the development of nursing during the last thirty years.

Sister Caroline was one of the first batch of four probationers who started work at the Training School for Nurses opened by H.M. Queen Sophia at Uplandsgate, Stockholm. She entered the school on New Year's Eve, 1883, and work was begun on the first day of the New Year.

The training of the nurses was in the hands of Miss Alfhild Ehrenborg, who was in charge of one of the blocks at the Sabbatsberg Hospital and who had there taught the first probationers.

The course was not a long one, as these first-trained nurses were required to train others who were awaiting training. Thus the first course was one of only ten months' duration, but much that was lost by shortness of time was made up by the seriousness with which the work was done.

Miss Ehrenborg went with her four probationers from block to block, department to department so that they might gain as much experience as possible in different branches of the work.

At the close of the course two of the trained nurses were given posts at the Sabbatsberg Hospital, whilst the other two took up private work. Sister Caroline was one of the latter, and, with the exception of a short period when she did duty for Miss Ehrenborg, she worked as a private nurse until July, 1885. In this year she took duty in charge of the Surgical Department VI C at the Sabbatsberg Hospital. In April of the following year she went on to the Serafimer Hospital to lay the foundation, with one or two comrades, of the Sophia Home within the Serafimer Hospital.

In 1886, in December, the Serafimer Hospital had its first Matron—Deaconess Thérèse Olterdahl—who, however, left after one year. She was followed by Miss Safira Lejonflycht, who stayed a little longer than her predecessor. On December 1st, 1889, Sister Caroline took up the work of Matron.

At the old hospital there was no room set aside for the Matron, therefore her quarters were in a farm near by. Her midday meal was taken with the operators. In one department Sister had a small room where she kept stores and dispensed them.

In November, 1891, the large new buildings were opened, the out-patient department, the new medical ward with a pavilion, a gynæcological department, and a Röntgen-ray department were

all added, and important changes were made in the numbers and the organisation of the staff.

The development of the hospital has thus been the life-work of Sister Caroline, and "we Sisters," says the Swedish Nurses' Journal, "know well how much influence she had on all who came in contact with her—we know that many and many a soul will send her heartfelt thanks for the years which have passed. We wish her every blessing in the future."



SISTER CAROLINE WIDSTRÖM.

PRACTICAL POINTS.

FROM THE "PACIFIC COAST JOURNAL OF NURSING."

Bacteriology of Bathing Pools. Many investigations have recently been

made concerning the infectiousness of bathing pools following

epidemics of skin disease or pink-eye, which seem to have their origin in such pools. H. F. J. Porter, in the *Survey*, July 27, gives a summary of the results of investigations of swimming pools conducted at various places. He quotes Atkins of the department of bacteriology, Chicago University, who tells of five epidemics following bathing in rivers or in pools filled from rivers where sewage contamination exists. He also reports that five pools whose water supply was supposed to be clean were the source of cases of eye, ear, throat, intestinal, and venereal diseases, including one epidemic of vulvo-vaginitis which spread among 236 girls using a school swimming pool. Porter says that as ordinarily conducted, swimming pools are little better than cesspools, and clear themselves of bacteria largely on the septic tank principle.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)