

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

On Saturday afternoon April 25th, the Matrons' Council held its quarterly meeting at Rochester, by invitation of the Committee of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and the Matron, Miss Pote Hunt, and of all the pleasant meetings arranged for the Council none has exceeded in interest, in success, and warmth of welcome and hospitality, that spent at Rochester last Saturday.

It was a happy and representative party which met the President, Miss M. Heather-Bigg and the Hon. Secretary, Miss A. Hulme at Charing Cross Station, and travelled down to Rochester in the special carriages provided. Both at Rochester and Chatham, Miss Pote Hunt had arranged to have the morning trains met by members of the nursing staff, and those who arrived at Rochester at 11.18 were also met by Mr. Edwin Harris who most kindly acted as their guide, and showed them more of the historic city, in an hour and a half, than they would have seen in a day under ordinary circumstances.

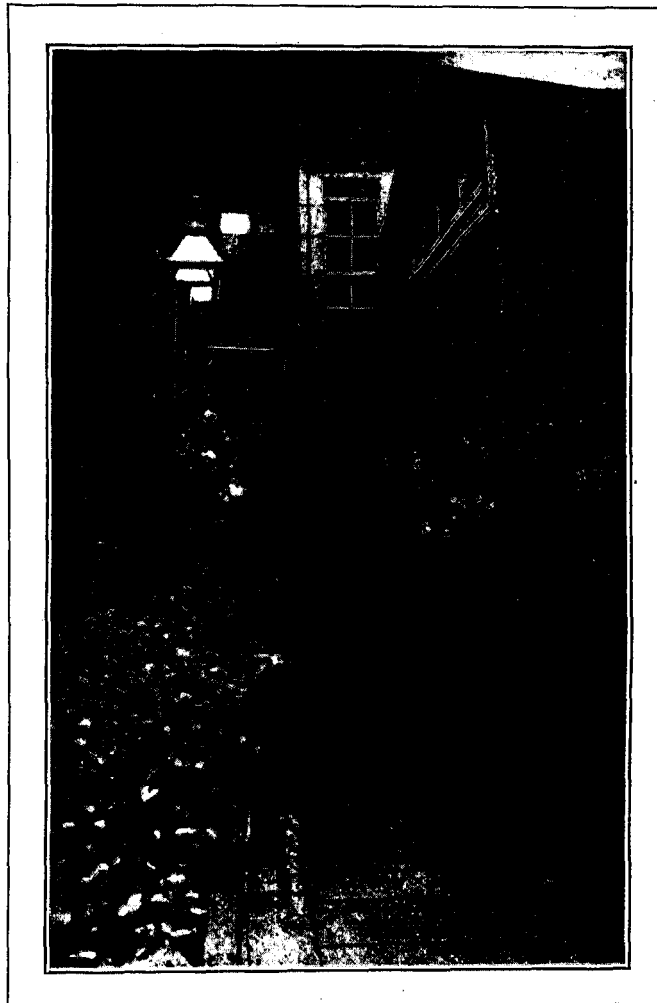
First Eastgate House, an Elizabethan House of the greatest interest at one time known as the "Nuns' House," then used as a "Seminary for Young Ladies," and so referred to in "Edwin Drood." Now it is used as a museum in which are to be seen rare examples of plaster ceilings, one with the arms of Sir Peter and Lady Buck, and a heraldic fleur de lys, tied with ribbon; beautiful oak panelling—fine carving. Also the whipping post used in the city in sterner times, and a collection of engravings, pottery, and many interesting historical relics of former days.

Most interesting also is Richard Watts' Charity. When Watts first came to the city in search of work, he was given supper and a night's lodging by a benevolent citizen and a groat (4d.) in the morning before he left. In the days of his prosperity he wished to provide the same benefit for others in necessity, and when seriously ill sent for a proctor (or lawyer) to draw up his will making such provision. On his unexpected recovery it was found that this worthy "had perverted his intentions, and given to himself that which was

dedicated to God and to pious uses." This seems to be the origin of the quaint provision of the benefaction founded by Richard Watts in 1579 "for six poor travellers who, not being rogues or proctors, may receive gratis for one night, lodging, entertainment, and four pence each." The house itself is most interesting, each guest has a simply furnished bedroom opening on to a covered gallery, well seen in our illustration, which shows that fresh air and its benefits were appreciated even in Elizabethan days. There is a small washhouse also where the travellers bathe their feet, and wash their hands and faces before entering the dining room where each receives for supper half a loaf of bread and a liberal portion of meat. They can then read, write, or smoke till bedtime.

The revenues from his charities have so increased in value that the trustees have been able not only to maintain the bequests of the founder, but to supplement them. One of the most interesting uses to nurses to which these surplus funds are applied is the provision of two trained nurses in the city—one for midwifery, and the other for district nursing work.

Our guide next conducted us to the Cathedral,



WATTS' CHARITY.—ELIZABETH COVERED GALLERY.

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