

NURSING AND THE WAR.

On Wednesday the 24th ult., Miss Constance Todd, Matron St. John Ambulance Brigade Hospital, Etaples, and Sister Kathleen Flower, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve, were decorated by the King at Buckingham Palace, with the Royal Red Cross (First-Class).

The portrait of Mlle. Marcelle Semmer, the valiant young daughter of France, who, for her loyalty, has been decorated with the Croix de Guerre, and the Legion of Honour, will be received with the greatest interest. When Lars Porsena, of Clusium, and all the Etruscan armies were on the march for Rome and their van had arrived at the bridge-head, Horatius cried:—

“Hew down the
bridge, Sir Consul,
with all the speed
ye may,
I, with two more, to
help me, will hold
the foe in play,
In yon strait path a
thousand may well
bestopped by three;
Now who will stand
on either hand,
and keep the bridge
with me?”

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

In the retreat in August, 1914, when the French had crossed the Somme and its canal, followed close behind by the enemy, Marcelle Semmer performed a deed of similar heroism. With the greatest presence of mind, under enemy fire, she opened the sluice gates in order to prevent the Germans crossing the canal, and so held them back until the following morning. Further, she remained in the village, removing and hiding underground 16 exhausted French soldiers, helping them subsequently to escape in civilian clothing. Caught by the enemy in the act of feeding a French soldier, she was condemned to death, and when questioned, dauntlessly replied: “I am an orphan, and have but one mother—France. Do with me what you will.” She was on the point of being executed, when the French artillery

dispersed the Germans. She then hid till next day, when the village was retaken by the French. While serving as guide to a patrol, she was again taken prisoner, and was imprisoned in a church, from which she escaped in the night through a shell hole, and regained the French lines.

We commend the practical evidence of patriotism of the forty-two Nurses attached to the staff of the Portsmouth Infirmary. Owing to shortage of male labour on the land, these ladies have offered their services to the Portsmouth Guardians, for potato planting during their off-duty time.

A letter to that effect was read at the last Board Meeting by the Matron, and when read by the Chairman of the Infirmary Committee, it was received with applause by a full attendance of members. A resolution to accept the offer with thanks was carried.

Miss Spooner, trained at the West Bromwich Infirmary, who was in the historic retreat of the Serbian Army in 1915, has accepted a post under the Serbian Government in a War hospital, with prospects of an after-war appointment, to help organise Nursing work amongst Serbian women. It would appear as if Hygeia is to receive due homage, when peace comes in belligerent countries, which knew not her beneficent creed aforetime.



MLLE. MARCELLE SEMMER.

The Canadian Nurse
says:—

“When the details of the shooting of Mme. Heloise Moresse become known, the world will find the case is a parallel to that of Miss Edith Cavell, according to *Vie Feminine*, which reports the death of the patriotic Frenchwoman executed in Brussels.

“Mme. Moresse was the wife of a Belgian journalist. When the war began she remained with him. Her relatives last heard directly from her in January, 1915, but recently a merchant in Amsterdam wrote to them, saying she died ‘tragically,’ February 29th, 1916, ‘the victim of her ardent patriotism.’ Confirmation has been obtained of the report that she was shot by the Germans. Mme. Moresse was a nurse.”

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