

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

(Concluded from page 108.)

FOUR FLORENTINE HOSPITALS.

IV.

THE HOSPITAL OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, OR
FOUNDLING HOSPITAL.

On the east side of the Piazza della Santissima Annunziata stands this well-known building. There are many foundling hospitals, where poor, little unwanted babes may be deposited. They do not as a rule attract much attention or interest I fear, but this one is famous, not on account of its small inmates, but because the great sculptor, Andrea della Robbia, has decorated the loggia by which it is approached with a series of roundels in blue and white terra-cotta ware, representing those charming swaddled babies which we all know so well; one between each arch of the colonnade. The hospital was designed by one of the greatest of Italy's mediæval architects, namely, Brunelleschi, who began it in 1421. His greatest work was the construction of the dome of the Cathedral, which was built without scaffolding! and which took fourteen years to complete. The hospital contains a fine courtyard, and is in the form of a quadrangle; a convent and church are attached, and the hospital is under the control of the nuns; one of them kindly showed us over. It gives one instantly the impression of a well-ordered, well-kept institution; exquisite cleanliness everywhere. Apparently there are different ways of swaddling babies. I was glad to observe that the method adopted here was much looser than I have seen elsewhere. In former times, an unmarried mother could bring her babe, place it in a basket conveniently placed for the purpose, ring a bell and run away! Things are not quite so easy now. The mother is obliged to come in with her babe, and nurse and tend it for four months, and sometimes, if need be, she is required to act as wet nurse to another. They wear a distinctive dress. The mothers are required to give every particular about themselves, but not of the fathers. The children are trained to earn their living, and may, at any time up to the age of twenty-one, regard the hospital as their home and return to it; but after that age they are not taken back. Some of the girls are kept by the nuns to look after the younger generation of babies. I could not but observe a general air of happiness and cheerfulness about them; it has evidently been a happy home to them under the good nuns.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Verity for his courtesy in giving me the passport of his introduction, which enabled me to see so much of interest.

BEATRICE KENT.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Search thine own heart. What paineth thee
In others, in thyself may be;
All dust is frail, all flesh is weak;
Be thou the true man thou dost seek.

—John G. Whittier.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

A LASTING MEMORIAL TO THE WORK OF
WOMEN FOR WOMEN.

When we visited the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893, as President of the Nursing Section of the British Royal Commission, we met some of the most famous women in the world, amongst them the pioneer suffragists, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony. At that time there was a monstrous privileged opposition to votes for women in the majority of American States, as the leaders were known to be out against graft, dime salons, white slave traffic, and other lucrative works of the devil, and it took the pioneers and their daughters seventy years to convince Congress of the justice and righteousness of their cause.

Now what a change is here! We find in the programme of the National Women's Party held in Washington, U.S.A., last week, that on the 15th inst., a Memorial Service to Pioneer Suffragists was held in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol, when presentation of statues (works of great artistic merit by Mrs. Adelaide Johnson) of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott were unveiled, and received on behalf of Congress by Speaker Gillett of the House of Representatives, which will be placed in the Rotunda of the Capitol as a lasting memorial to the work of women for women. Wreaths were laid at the base of the statues by all the representative organisations of women, and we are glad to note amongst them the International Council of Nurses (Miss Dock writes: "I am going to have pretty young foreign nurses to lay the wreaths"), the American Nurses' Association, the Army Nurse Corps, the Navy Nurse Corps, the National Red Cross Nurses and other nurses' organisations. Mrs. Ida Husted Harper, who has done so much to gain this well-merited recognition for these great women, writes:—

"Those who have seen these exquisite busts do not hesitate to say that this will be the most beautiful and impressive sculpture in the Capitol. It will commemorate for all time what Wendell Phillips termed 'the greatest reform ever launched upon the world,' and will preserve in imperishable marble the portraits of the three great leaders in the movement to embody this reform in the Federal Constitution. They should be dedicated with the most memorable ceremonies ever seen in that historic building, with the most prominent organisations of women in this and other countries participating, and to this work of art every woman should contribute as a thanks offering for her freedom."

We should love to have been present at these "memorable ceremonies."

COMING EVENTS.

February 26th.—Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Bills Council. Meeting, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 1. 4 p.m.

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