

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO THE ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL.

The visit of Her Majesty the Queen to the Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road, W.C., on May 11th, to open the new Clinical Unit of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in London, recognized by the Senate of London University, was much more than an ordinary visit, marking approval of philanthropic endeavour; for the purpose of the Unit is essentially that of a teaching department and its organization is directed to that end. It has other important purposes, but it was primarily to emphasise her interest in the higher education of women, and of medical women in particular, that the Queen honoured the Royal Free Hospital with her presence and opened the block of wards which bear her name.

On May 11th the Outpatient Hall had been metamorphosed into Fairyland. Groups of flowers and ferns, tastefully arranged, were placed in every available nook and corner. The beautiful colour scheme was punctuated with the brilliant Academic robes of the women graduates, which were seen in great variety, the scarlet and mauve of the M.D. being specially notable.

On arrival at the hospital, the Queen, who was attended by Lady Ampthill and Mr. Harry Verney, was received by the Princess Christian, who was accompanied by Princess Helena Victoria. After a number of presentations had been made, Princess Christian, as President of the Royal Free Hospital, read an address expressing to the Queen, on her own behalf, and that of the Governors, their warm gratitude for Her Majesty's interest in the welfare and progress of the institution, and for the honour she had conferred upon the hospital by coming to open the gynaecological wards in connection with the Unit of Obstetrics and Gynaecology under the University of London. In the name of the hospital, the Princess offered Her Majesty a most heartfelt welcome.

Miss Aldrich Blake, M.D., M.S., Dean of the Medical School, welcomed the Queen on behalf of the staff of the School and Hospital, and of past and present students, in well chosen words, in the course of which she pointed out that the establishment of the Clinical Unit in Obstetrics and Gynaecology which Her Majesty had so graciously consented to open, marked a further step in the progress of the School of Medicine for Women, which is now nearing the jubilee of its existence. Further, that a Clinical Unit was a new thing in Medical Education in this country—a body of clinical teachers devoting all their energies to the investigation and treatment of disease, and to teaching.

The Dedication Service was conducted by the Archdeacon of London, the last part being in the wards of the Unit. The Queen was then asked to confer a name on the Department, and graciously signified her wish that the group of wards should be known as Queen Mary's Wards.

The wards and annexes form the upper section of a hollow square built round the main Outpatients' Hall. The Obstetric section has been named Washington, in recognition of the generous assistance given by the American Red Cross, the American Women's Club, and the Duchess of Marlborough.

The Obstetric Ward looked delightfully homelike, and we were specially pleased to see that each baby's cot was by the side of the mother's bed, instead of slung at the foot, where hospital etiquette appears to decree it shall be as a rule. The sets of clothes for mothers and babies were both practical and fascinating. For the mother there were the pretty blue dressing gown and bed jacket faced with cream and blue, the labour gown open down the back, and the nightgown specially made so that feeding can be carried on without uncovering the patient. For the baby, the dainty little dress or gown, flannel, and vest all fit one inside the other, and can be slipped on together, so that there is no unnecessary turning of the child, the cot cover and pillow slips complete this equipment. We do not wonder that the Queen was much interested in the specimen set submitted for her inspection.

In the bath-room for the babies is a porcelain stand of four baths, provided with every convenience, and more, there are shelves divided into numbered compartments two for each baby, one containing everything necessary for use for washing purposes and the other a special bowl for the lotion for swabbing the eyes. Underneath hang towels bearing the same number.

The labour room, with granolithic floor, has a division so that privacy can at any time be secured for two labours being conducted simultaneously. The beds are of a convenient height. Near by is a "Treasure Cot" for the reception of the infant, with a receiver ready. Pieces of old blanket are specially kept for this and, with a lining of soft towelling, are ideal for the purpose.

The gynaecological wards have anæsthetic room and operating theatre attached. The wards themselves are charming—the tables with blue tiled tops, and the capacious lockers with marble tops. The patients make a contribution to their maintenance, and in one ward, in a section of which are four beds, they are treated practically as private patients. It is the pleasantest ward imaginable, with an outlook over green trees, and here, for an inclusive fee, the best of medical treatment and skill are available. The standard of nursing is also a high one. There will, we imagine, rarely be a vacant bed.

The Unit of 35 beds in the hospital is completed by 33 in the Marlborough Maternity Section in Endsleigh Street, W.C., which includes a separate section of four beds for those saddest of all maternity cases those suffering from venereal disease. Miss Batten, trained at the Royal Free Hospital, is Matron there.

If a Teaching Unit is to be successfully arranged, everything depends upon its Director, and in Professor Louise McIlroy, M.D., D.Sc., the London School of Medicine has found a head who should

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