

them used to discipline and hospital etiquette. The training at first was for only two years; after that time two of them were appointed Sisters!

After six months, two more wards were given over to us, male and female medical—this to enable the nurses to get fuller training. Large beautiful airy wards, with French windows opening into a garden; beds, chairs and tables all white.

The work in my ward I found most interesting. The Professor gave bedside clinics to students, and as I could by then understand more Italian, I found them a great help.

Most of the medicines are given by injections into the muscle—iron chiefly, and various other tonics. They act quickly and without stomach disturbance, as is often the case over here. Two injections usually are given each day. The patients feel very neglected if they are not having anything done in this respect.

The food was terrible!

First meal, 6 a.m., consisted of black coffee and bread, latter being very stale and quite grey in colour. 10.30 a.m. macaroni was served out to every one, a large trolley being wheeled round the wards by two men, and a Nun, who distributed all the food. Not until nearly one hour after did the second course come round; this consisted usually of fish, or sometimes meat cooked in oil, also potatoes. No puddings. The drink was wine (even children had it), one or two small bottles being given to each one, as the Nun considered best. Next meal, 3 p.m., consisted of most delicious ice-cream, which was brought round after three hours' siesta, the wards being darkened, and patients must rest from 12 to 3 p.m. What amazed me was to see ice cream being given to patients after an abdominal or gastric operation, even the day following it may be! It did not seem to affect them in the least. No tea was ever given.

At 6.30 p.m. another repetition of the morning meal, and nothing more until 6 a.m.

Patients on fluid diet would have more milk or eggs (which were taken raw) brought round again in the evening, and deposited on the lockers. It can easily be seen that it was difficult to give the Nurses a good, systematic training, as we had neither charge of food nor stores, or even the Theatre, but Matron was able to insist upon the Nurses going in with their cases.

In time we did hope to take over more in these departments. We could only teach and explain how things were done in our Hospitals at home.

I was Night Sister for a short time, and as our wards were close to two others in the same clinic (but not belonging to us), the Professor asked if I would go round and see everything was all right. The men or women in charge resented it, naturally. I nearly always found them asleep in a chair with a blanket or two covering them. If they woke up they would shrug their shoulders and go off again.

It is terrible to see how much needed good nursing is over there. When I first went out,

I worked as "Sister on Probation" under an Italian nurse, who had previously received training at a London Hospital. The ward was women's surgical, eighteen beds in all. There was nothing but bare necessities. Open iron lockers, with a lower shelf. On the top was always a water-bottle and glass; also a bottle of milk, eggs perhaps, or any special diet the patient might be on. This was brought round by the Nun in charge. (May I just add that we had nothing to do with this all important item, the food.) When we first took over the wards, as in all the others, the same; any medicine or pills that a patient was having would be kept on the locker, too, and he could help himself whenever he wished! The Nun would come round daily to see if more was needed, and thereby replenish the stock. I full well remember later when I took over a men's medical ward, the patients being most irate and shouting to the doctor that she had taken their medicine! In time that difficulty was overcome.

The patients were quite good to nurse, especially the women, but most excitable, especially on coming round from an anæsthetic. I remember one, after appendicectomy was performed, kicking and throwing her limbs about; the others were calling out furiously to me something which, when I did eventually understand what they were saying, was that I should tie her legs together! That being quite a common practice in the wards.

One day there was an earthquake, rather a severe one, which lasted for one second. I shall never easily forget it. The patients were just dreadful, so terribly agitated, and all insisted upon getting up and preparing to go home—even those who had just been operated on. It was a very long time before the doctors or any one could persuade them to lie still.

The work out there is really encouraging as it grows; great improvements are still needed and more pioneers. It calls for great patience and much tact, but one has to remember that even "Rome was not built in a day."

M. C.

COMING EVENTS.

January 1st.—New Year's Day.

January 24th.—Dance for Nurses. Trades Hall, Glasgow. Arranged by Sir John and Lady Reid.

LAST WORDS FOR 1921.

"Whenever there is life to be tended, nourished or nursed, educated and saved, whether the life be yet unborn or new-born, or senile or ill, there is the field for womanhood exercising its great function of foster motherhood."

—Harriet Leck, R.N.

"It is better to go down on the great seas which human hearts were made to sail, than to rot at the wharves of ignoble anchorage."—Mabie.

"Help thy brother's boat across, and lo, thine own has reached the shore."—Hindoo Proverb.

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