

HEADQUARTERS OF THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

Imagination is a gift for which those who possess it can never be sufficiently thankful, and which often makes life of roseate hue. Dull care, the blues, flee away before its gilded vision—and its compelling force moves mountains.

Thus, when we first entered 39, Portland Place, London, W., prospecting for Headquarters for the British College of Nurses, we were not discouraged by gingerbread coloured walls, rusty and damaged grates, lack of fittings, furniture and colour.

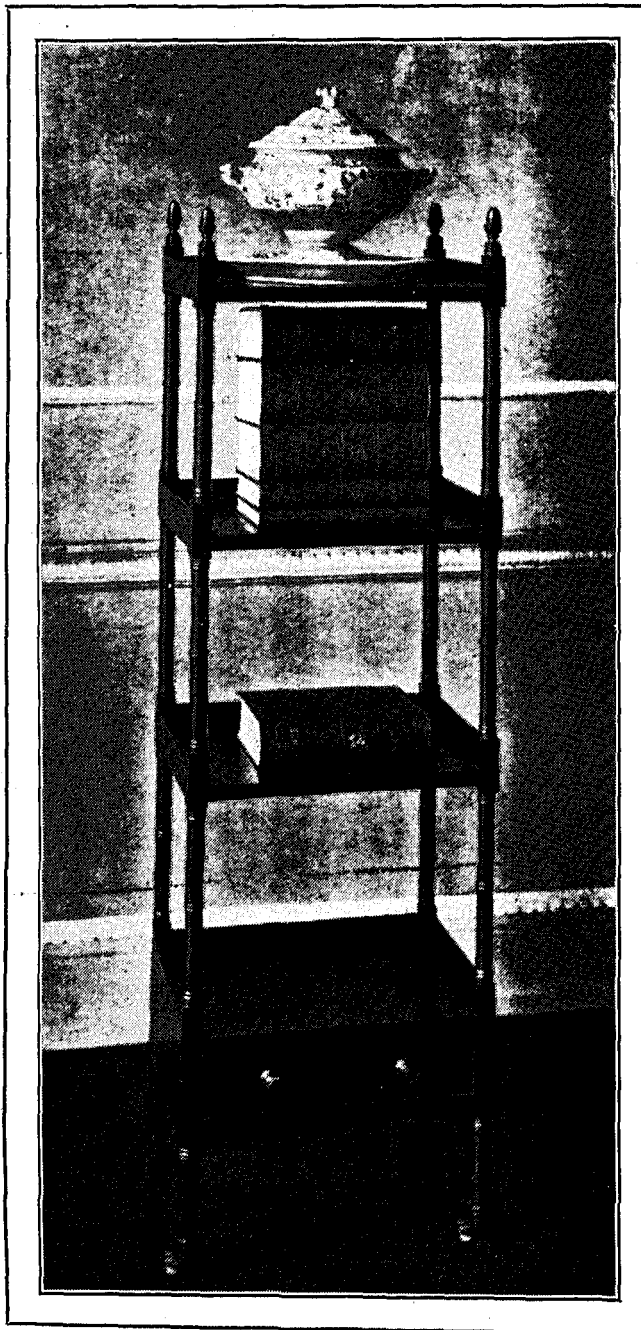
First and foremost there was not a dark corner in the building. Windows—splendid windows—and fine headlight everywhere; and little imagination was required to visualise an interior beautified by taste. The slab of marble before the beautiful carved mahogany entrance door—of the tone of pale honey—such as time has made exquisite in the frieze of the Parthenon radiated hope within. Two fine halls, marble paved in black and white, a spacious stone staircase, lighted from above, ending with a corridor flanked by noble white pillars.

On the ground floor two very fine rooms with mahogany doors and parquet floors (to be the Council Chamber and Recording Office), gingerbread brown to-day, but on the morrow to be soft golden chrome yellow and white, sunshine in one or the other throughout the day. Rusty steel grates—to shine as silver, exquisitely engraved, and pierced. Marble mantle-pieces—one original Adam—to support fine mirrors, exquisite lustrés mounted in ormolu, and a *garniture de Cheminée* of fine eighteenth century blue and white Liverpool pottery made by Pennington! Thus imagination, and now realisation in every detail!

The third room on the ground floor of unique and fascinating shape, bowed windows and archway, here the tone of paint to be hedge-sparrow blue, with blue hearth to match, and oxidised silver grate and electric branches, a carpet of dark blue ground strewn with flowers, blue and pink, old-fashioned chintzes, black satin cushions, little old tables—on the centre arranged the Nursing Press of the world, and a few more frivolous publications, flowers, china (a cigarette corner). Silent dim, dull, little room as we first beheld you, who would know you now in your gay attire, in which to enjoy the future possibilities of tea, gossip and rest.

Then up the spacious staircase we vision walls of French grey, white steps and harmonious lovely carpets. Here, on the first floor, we find the splendid Examination and Lecture Halls, to be decorated in true French grey (a shade beloved by Marie Antoinette) so seldom achieved by British craftsmen, with frieze, panels, and pillars picked out in white, an exquisite Flaxman Room, original Adam ceilings, carved mahogany doors, and a floor in which all is reflected in the highly polished parquet. Here the tiled surrounds and hearths are to be of sympathetic grey, with a dash of mauve and pink, only perceptible to the artist's eye, on which are placed silver d grates embossed with ormolu; the electric fittings must have centre glass chandeliers and ormolu candle brackets. Surely in such surroundings the mind would be receptive and alive to learning, and inspired to answer correctly the most delicate and searching questions an examiner might formulate!

All this and more has come to pass. Over the Nurses' Room there is another charming apartment—all in French grey tones *en suite*—with the large Halls, where it is intended to



EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY WHAT-NOT.

To be used as a Special Stand for "The Register of Nurses," Presented by Dick and David Fenwick, grandsons of the President. The File of Registers, presented by Miss A. M. Bushby, F.B.C.N., Member of the Council.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)