

## THE PASSING BELL.

On May 23rd, there passed away, in her 89th year, a great "Old Nightingale" Nurse—Miss Elisabeth Vincent.

Trained at St. Thomas's Hospital in the early seventies, Miss Vincent was Sister Arthur there in 1876, when she was sent by Miss Nightingale to open Lincoln County Hospital as its first Matron, with seven trained Nurses from St. Thomas's.

In 1881, Miss Nightingale induced her to go as the first trained Matron to St. Marylebone Infirmary, to try to raise the standard for the care of the sick in this Poor Law Infirmary, where hitherto the patients had been left entirely in the hands of able-bodied paupers.

Miss Vincent's assistant, Miss Styring, who was also a "Nightingale" Nurse and who later became Matron of Paddington Infirmary, writes:—

"Only those who worked with Miss Vincent in the early years at St. Marylebone Infirmary know of the many difficulties and trials, at times almost overwhelming, which fell to her lot: in those days it was considered almost a stigma to be engaged in Poor Law Nursing, and until a Nurses' Home was built the difficulty of engaging and keeping a sufficient Staff for that large Infirmary was insupportable; but Miss Vincent never lost courage; she carried bravely on, supported by the loyalty of the Sisters she had taken with her from St. Thomas's Hospital. Later, the Guardians built a Nurses' Home, and a Nurses' Training School was established—this School being affiliated for a limited number of Probationers to the Nightingale School at St. Thomas's Hospital.

"Miss Vincent was considered a first authority in matters connected with Poor Law Nursing, and was consulted by Matrons and others connected with many Infirmarys for help and instruction how best to start a Training School. She was a gifted and wonderful organiser and maintained a high tone throughout her Infirmary in spite of the many difficulties she was faced with: the pauper element was so difficult to eliminate, but by degrees it was accomplished, and Miss Nightingale often saw her and encouraged her to persevere. She was a pioneer in Poor Law Nursing and held the Matronship of Marylebone Infirmary for 19 years."

On her retirement in 1900 she continued for some years to serve on various Hospital and Nursing Committees.

With her passing, another personal link with Florence Nightingale has also passed.

Her cousin, Miss C. E. Vincent, R.R.C., also trained at St. Thomas's Hospital, is the present Matron of Leicester Royal Infirmary, whose early retirement from that important office is so sincerely regretted by all her colleagues.

The late Miss Frances Ellen Evenden passed away at her home in Ulverston on June 11th and was interred at Ulverston Cemetery on June 13th. The Rector, the Rev. J. Stuart Rinnan, M.A., officiating. At the time of her death the deceased had held the post of Matron of the Union Hospital, Rotherham, since 1922, and a message of sympathy was sent by the Rotherham Board of Guardians to the relatives along with beautiful floral tributes from the nursing, medical and domestic staffs.

Miss Evenden who was a State Registered Nurse, and a Fellow of the British College of Nurses, was trained at Southwark Union Hospital, obtained the C.M.B. at Bristol General Hospital and held posts at New Cross Fever Hospital, Bagthorpe Union Hospital, Nottingham; Fraborough Union Hospital, Kent; Ecclesall Union Hospital, Sheffield. She was also Assistant Matron and District Superintendent at the Maternity Hospital, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool and then Matron at the Union Hospital, Rotherham. Simultaneous with the funeral at Ulverston of the

late Miss F. E. Evenden a memorial service was held in the Nurses' Home at Rotherham at which members of the staff were present.

The late Matron was held in the greatest esteem by the whole of the members of the staff and profound sorrow was manifested when the news reached Rotherham that she had passed away.

## BOOK OF THE MONTH.

## "JOAN OF ARC." \*

The celebrations in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the raising of the siege of Orleans by Joan of Arc, began at Chinon, the town which she entered in March, 1429, on her historic journey to Orleans, where a monument in her honour has just been unveiled by President Doumergue. The publication of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's book, "Joan of Arc," opportunely enables us to study with reverent admiration the astounding history of her picturesque and romantic life.

In this concise volume we have a vivid portraiture of the "Maid" and her mission from her childhood to her tragic martyrdom, and we heartily commend it to our readers. Its literary style is adapted to the period with which it deals, and greatly adds to its realism.

While the evils of the war between France and England in the fifteenth century were taking place there was a girl child born to James D'Arc and his wife, Isabel, of Domrémy, in the Marches of Lorraine, whom they called Joan on the day she was baptized into the Church of God. She grew up tall and sturdy, strong of body and clear of mind, and vigorous at her tasks of spinning and all housework; she would tend sheep and she would plough upon their half-hundred acres, for her father was a yeoman. Also she was famous with her needle.

As a child she played round the fairies' beech tree in the place, hanging garlands, singing and dancing there with her brothers and sisters and other children of the hamlet; and at home her mother taught her the Hail Mary, and the Our Father and the Creed. It was in a pleasant valley, with long hills on either side and woods upon them, and the young River Meuse flowed by.

It was on a summer morning when she was thirteen that she first heard the "Voices."

It was noon. As she stood by the door of her parents' house a dazzling light shone by her at her right hand, supplanting the day, and she was overcome with terror, till from the midst of the glory came a Voice which spoke of Faith and its observance, and at last gave order that she should seek the uncrowned King of France, dispossessed by his foes, and crown him at Rheims.

She was so young and so trembling that she told no one, but she turned to a new piety till her devotion seemed ridiculous to those about her. As time went on her summoning Heralds from beatitude would not let her be, but urged her still. St. Catherine and St. Margaret, who were fragrant, speaking in low and lovely voices, week after week, every two days or three. She lived in this companionship, consecrated, hesitant, impelled.

It was not till her seventeenth year that she spoke. It was the week of the Ascension in that same year when the Duke of Bedford was sending message to raise new forces in England. It was in the house of her cousin, one Lassois, that she first spoke and said:

"Have you not heard how France laid waste by a woman shall be restored by a Maid?"

\* By Hilaire Belloc. Cassell & Co.

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