

and its present developments. "Hôpital Saint Jean l'Evangeliste" may be compared with "hospitals" dedicated to the same saint by the Order of St. John in Jerusalem, which were often as much hostels or almshouses as hospitals (*cf.* St. Cross, Winchester). It was referred to sometimes as "seneschal Stephen's almshouse" but it soon became a *hospice* in our sense of the word and a hospital rule was imposed by the Pope in 1267. The second part of the title, that dealing with penitents, mental cases and incurables, shows the additions made from time to time. These are now co-ordinated in a section known as the *Hospice Sainte Marie*, all the buildings occupying positions in one vast estate. It is probably owing to the complexity of the work that I was unable to obtain reliable statistics, and any figures given are merely approximative and to be taken with reserve.

I obtained an interview with a lady secretary who really seemed to be only an admitting clerk, for she either could not or would not give me any information on the work

and also private nurses. I rather think that all the nuns lived in the town and came only daily to hospital. The same seemed to apply to the lay helpers of whom there were a considerable number, ward-maids, kitchen-maids, etc.

The condition of the hospice inmates ill enough to be in bed was delightful, for the wards had large windows opening on gardens, and the beds were arranged for the patients to see out. The old folk who were up and about seemed much less comfortable, for their "recreation room" had not a pretty outlook, and was furnished only with hard rush-bottomed chairs and a large deal table, no books, no flowers, no comforts, but, I am glad to say, efficient heating.

The clinics of the hospital proper are built in the usual way in blocks, each filling three sides of a square, the south side being left open. Each block had, facing the road to the south, a *very* wide verandah, almost a ward in itself, full of patients on long chairs. As the whole institution is on the slope of a hill, the upper floors of the clinics are on the same level as the gardens of the hospice and light bridges have been thrown across the intervening slope so as to save stair-climbing.

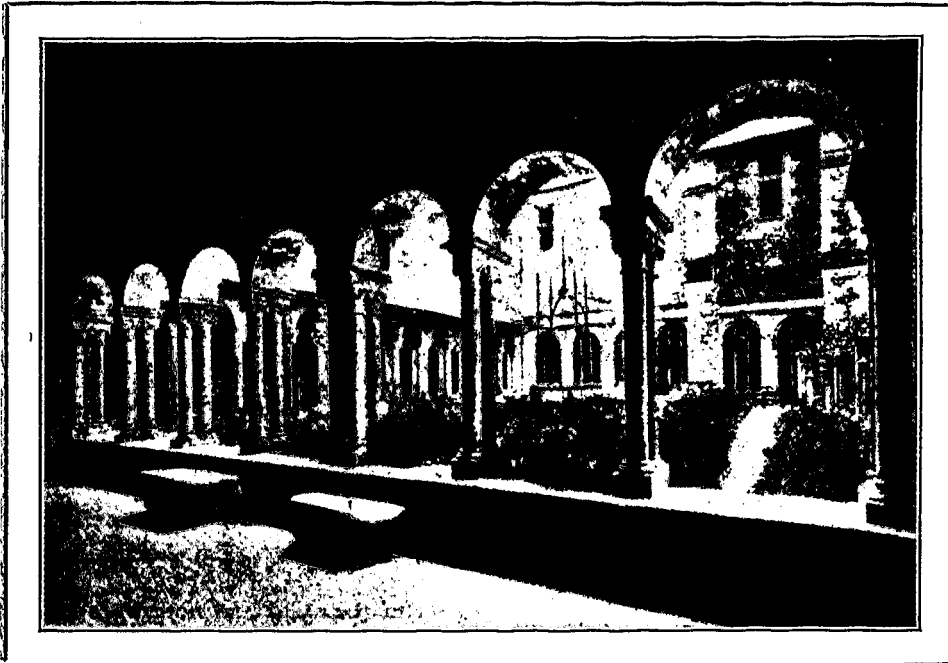
The "maternity" is half a mile or more from the other buildings, and everyone told me that it was new and most up-to-date in every way. They were all very proud of it, but, as my time was limited, I took its perfections for granted and satisfied myself with a visit to a nearer building, a garden pavilion on one floor only, used for after-care of unmarried mothers, probably the "penitentes" of the old foundation.

I had already seen notices in the main office, stating that unmarried expectant mothers would be received discreetly in hospital if they applied either to the prefect or to the chief midwife, and also, more surprisingly, that children brought to the chief midwife, under seven months in age, would be adopted by the hospital and no questions

asked. So I was not specially surprised to find between 20 and 30 unmarried mothers, all feeding their infants in the little pavilion. My conversation with the sister-in-charge surprised me more, for she told me that her aim and object was to place the girls in situations where they could support the child. The responsibility of the child would often keep them "straight." "But it is hard work for a woman to support both herself and a child and when there are two . . ." "Two?" I gasped. "Yes, that girl there (a slip of a thing barely twenty, with close shingled head) she has her second illegitimate child in her arms. But they are not all hopeless. One does one's best, and sometimes one succeeds."

I looked at the sister. She was not young. She was fat, and her unwieldy robes made her look fatter still. If I could show you her photograph you would say she was plain, even very plain. But I would not show her photograph if I had it, for it would leave out the beauty of her face that I cannot forget. Beauty born of a great courage.

"No beauty's like the beauty of the mind."



THE HOTEL DIEU, ANGERS: THE CLOISTERS.

as a whole. However, she promised, if I would return in the afternoon, to allot me a guide to take me round.

My guide proved to be an inmate of the hospice who had been in business, but he failed, and now his children paid for him to live here. The charge was about £40 a year. Relatives of inmates are obliged to pay if they are able, but in extreme cases the parish of the inmate has to pay for him. The same applies to patients in the clinics who now pay about 3s. 6d. a day. These rates had lately been fixed, they had previously been a good deal lower and they might soon be altered again. His children did not allow my guide any pocket money, but the hospital gave him a few shillings a month to run messages. My shilling, after he had spent the whole afternoon with me, brought tears to his eyes but, to my great joy, no servility into his manner which, throughout, had been entirely courteous.

The hospital sisters are nuns of the order of St. Vincent de Paul. One of them told me that the nurses were "trained" for about 15 months and that, besides providing some 60 sisters for work in the hospital, her sisterhood had an institute in the town from which district nurses went out

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