

## A LAST SALUTE.

By ONE OF HER FRIENDS.

On Friday, October 21st, wax candles were burning amidst great clumps of flowers round the casket containing Dorothy Snell, as she lay in State in the lovely little chapel attached to the schools. I slipped in the file of people to see her, a slender ivory statue with the calm face of a nun, sensitive waxen hands crossed on her heart, dressed in her uniform, with decorations of the Boer War, the Italian War, and the Italian gold medal of "Publico Salute." Two young probationers kept watch, kneeling night and day at the foot of the casket, while the crowd of Doctors, nurses and patients passed through.

Saturday, October 22nd, was a warm October day, bright with Italian sunshine, as I walked up through the large block of buildings of the Policlinico Hospital in Rome, to the entrance of Queen Elena's School of Nurses. It stands a little back from the main front buildings, with little patches of green grass and cypress trees surrounding



Entering the beautiful Verano Cemetery at Rome, the last resting-place of Dorothy Snell.

it. The great crowd of Doctors (with world-known names, such as Bastionelli), nurses, patients and friends had already collected and overflowed into the long entrance gallery. It was impossible to enter the building.

Huge wreaths, some 6 ft. high, enormous to English eyes, decorated with great splashes of broad purple ribbon, with names in gold of the Associations and Wards sending them, were being held up by Fascist officials, and the Fascist salute, the old Roman salute of raising the right arm, was being given to Official Representatives. Queen Elena of Italy's beautiful wreath, 6 ft. in height, bound with broad Savoy-blue ribbon, with the crown in gold and her initial "E" in gold, was one of the loveliest there. I search my memory vainly in the lives of the past Queens for one who had shown appreciation as Queen Elena had done for her faithful servant of 21 years' service. She had visited her twice weekly regularly when in Rome, and had been in constant telephonic communication after she left for the summer. Count Leonardi represented her.

The procession of nurses was forming in the gallery. First the young probationers in little plain white caps, and long grey-green soldier coloured capes over their white dresses. Then the nursing sisters in long white veils and uniforms and shoes followed. Nuns in black veils and grey stuff dresses and servants in print dresses on the staff fell in behind. Then there followed a group of lovely fresh pink-complexioned nurses from the Anglo-American Nursing Home, lead by Miss Tudor, the matron, their English nationality easily recognised amongst the olive-skinned Italian girls.

It is beautifully and wonderfully expressive to see how the dead in Italy are saluted with the Fascist salute in the old Roman way, and as the English priest, Father Gardner, led the way out of the front door of the Home, followed by the casket, the Procession paused on the threshold, and in deep and solemn silence all arms present were raised for a minute in a Last Salute.

The crowd in which I followed in procession was almost entirely of poor working-class Italians, who had been healed by her ministrations, and there was a silence amongst us that was both comforting and uplifting as we walked round the Hospital, through the patches of green grass and cypress trees to the front gate, where we paused. And here, in the sunlight, with nurses drawn up in the military formation, Dorothy Snell's military training had produced, and encircled by Doctors and patients, we had in the wonderful Roman way the Eulogy, the Oration to the dead.

Dr. Galli, the head of the Policlinico Hospital, spoke with all the eloquence of the Latin race, and, in moving terms, of Dorothy Snell's life, given to one purpose in Italy—the training of nurses in the world-renowned English way—of her life work in a foreign country,

and of how the fine qualities of the English race had been represented in her, and in her training dedicated to another land. They were deeply grateful to her. They gave heartfelt thanks, as she herself did, for a life of work, brought to fruition and crowned with success. The Fascist Salute to the Dead followed. Then, following the flower-covered carriage with its black-plumed horses, and the sunlight giving fresh colour to the little bunches of flowers so many of the poorer carried, we passed through the great gates of the Hospital, through a large crowd (all followed on foot, there was no carriage beyond the hearse), led by her sister, Mrs. Whitehead, and the under-matron, with stern finely-cut Roman features, along the mile of road that led to the Catholic resting place.

The scene was full of colour, the young nurses gave the atmosphere of young life, the sunlight fell on their white caps and dresses, on the hearse covered entirely with enormous wreaths, and on the procession of poor people following behind (so few in black, so few could afford it),

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