

being added to them in 1555, and St. Bartholomew's in 1557.

"It has been shown clearly enough that the City was deeply interested in their success, and in this, no doubt, their security chiefly lay; for not even Philip and Mary, in spite of their zeal for the Roman Catholic Faith, were hardy enough to flout the City of London by giving its hospitals back to the Church."

It will be gathered that it was the undoubted intention of Edward VI and his advisers when he handed over to the City of London the three Royal Hospitals that "the City should administer the three institutions by one central body of governors, all of whom should be members of the City Corporation; and that the decentralisation which was found desirable was not altogether in harmony with the founder's intentions—this decentralisation proved the thin end of the wedge for further autonomy, for after 1587 we find that the annual election of the St. Thomas's Court of Governors at Christ's Hospital was quietly dropped and the court became self-electing."

The First Matron.

The first matron of the hospital of whom there is any record is the goodwife Waymond. On January 4th, 1557, the following entry appears in the minutes: "The goodman Waymond hathe admonyshyon that from henceforth he entermeddle not in the matron's office his wyf, upon payne of heir discharge of her said office."

"Rather more than a fortnight later the goodman apparently was still entermeddling, with the result that his wife was 'lycensed to be absent from her office untill Wensday the 27th of January next and yt is fully determyned that Amye Creade shall have and enjoye the office of the matrone of this house at the next advoydaunce of the matrone that now is, without anye farther sute to be made for the same by the said Amye. With this condicion she behave herself according to her office."

"On November 10th, 1557, Amye Creed, the new matron, 'exhibited a bill of sartayne faults agaynst the susters; and at this courte it was determined the matrone with expedition must seal her obligacone.' At the next court on November 24th, her accusations were considered 'and the matter was founde to be more of malice than of any gronde of trothe.' The matron and the sisters accused one another of various shortcomings and in the end 'the matrone had ordre given unto heir not only to use heir (behave) according to heir dutie and office but also to se earnestly unto the government of the susters that from henceforth there be no more dysordre among them.'" As she apparently received no support from the Governors this would appear to have been a somewhat impossible task.

It is interesting to read that the minutes at this time were most beautifully written, and the author says, "we are struck by the business-like, sensible, and forbearing way in which they seem to have conducted their affairs. They were chosen from the rulers of the City and were members of the great middle class which Henry VII., had done so much to create. Probably they represented the most capable brains in England at that time."

"It has been suggested that the hospital, restored by Edward VI, was an altogether new institution which had nothing to do with the old hospital dedicated to the Martyr and suppressed by Henry VIII." The author says, however, "that this was not the case is evident from the fact that the new hospital takes over and honours the commitments (leases granted by Mabott for fifty years) made before its temporary suppression."

It was the duty of the hospitaller, with the matron, to present to the governors at their weekly meeting all cases of offence in order that they might be corrected. On April 9th, 1565, also he was ordered to administer the Sacrament to the Sisters and allowed to receive their offerings on the four offering days.

An instance of the supervision of the Governors of their tenants is the notice given in 1562 to a tenant to leave because "when he is dronken he beateth his wife unreasonably."

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth punishments seemed to be more frequent than in that of Queen Mary. In January, 1563, "'yt ys agreed upon that a place shall be appointed to ponish the sturdy and transgressors,' and this place was provided with a whipping post, or cross, which by 1570 had seen so much service that it needed repairs. Not only inmates of both sexes were fastened to it but, in one case at least, it was used for a sister" and decreed "that the said Jone Thornton, according unto her desarte, should have for her ponyshmente twelve stryppes well layde on."

"The matron and sisters," says the author, "were a frequent source of trouble to the governors and evidently were drawn from a low class; sometimes, too, the hospitaller and the matron failed to work in harmony, and this, I fear, was not always the fault of the matron." The governors also decreed (May, 1557), "that the matrone shall be more famyllier and to companie with the whole sisters as heretofore the matrone hath used to do, and no more to misuse them with taunting words but with all lenitie and gentillnes to wyne them as becometh a matrone to do in her office."

On April 19th, 1563, the matron reported Margaret Allen, a sister, "For that she wolde not do her dutie in her office but ronne to the tavern and neglect her office."

"Three times Ann Reader, who was matron from 1572-1580 was haled before the court for drunkenness, twice she is pardoned on promise of amendment, and on the third occasion is privately dismissed."

Another matron was given notice and respited, but told that if there is any more of her "shrewd and unquiet temper" she will have to go. Apparently there was, as shortly afterwards she was discharged.

Various misdemeanours of sisters are related, and yet others the author has thought it "wiser to suppress."

Two other items of interest may be mentioned before we close this review; the office of Treasurer was first created in 1551 by the will of the King (Edward VI) who was to be "one honest, sober, and pious man . . . not only to survey the hospitall and poor-house but also to manage the revenues." To this position Mr. (later Sir) William Chester, afterwards Lord Mayor, was appointed in 1552, and the appointment appears to have been an excellent one, for when in 1556 the office of President was created "the obvious man for the post was Mr. Chester, who already had made so good a treasurer."

Further, in view of the fact that when Miss Nightingale went to the Crimea she took with her nuns from Bermondsey, it is an interesting coincidence that, quite early in its history, St. Thomas's received gifts of land and houses in Bermondsey, for which it had to pay small ground rents to Bermondsey Priory; and that under the Foundation Charter of Edward VI of the Hospitals of Christ, Bridewell, and St. Thomas the Apostle amongst the properties granted to the City of London at that time and ear-marked by the City for the maintenance of St. Thomas' Hospital, was the property in the County of Derby in which County, as we know, was situated the principal home of Miss Nightingale in her youth.

Dr. Parsons is greatly to be congratulated on this book, which carries the history of the hospital up to the year 1600. The immense amount of painstaking research, of deciphering difficult manuscripts, and the skill with which ancient records are treated so that they present to the ordinary reader a connected and lucid history of the hospital from its earliest days, call forth our warm admiration.

Its value is increased by some interesting illustrations. All Nurses' Libraries should possess a copy. We look forward with keen anticipation to the second volume.

MARGARET BREAY.

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