

staffed by monks and nuns who devoted their whole lives to the care of the sick and poor. And, since male nurses have not survived the Reformation to any important degree, it is interesting to discover the kind of life led by our predecessor the Nursing Sister, in England.

Very little has been written of the lives of these nuns who nursed the sick in England. This was because the service of the sick and poor was regarded as an essentially religious duty, and when women undertook it, they renounced the world and held themselves as dead to it, so that it is only by means of old account books and charters, unearthed by enthusiastic antiquarians, that we are enabled to catch glimpses of them at their work. To whatever hospital they were attached, whether it belonged to an orthodox religious order or not, they took the initial vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The Order serving most of the great hospitals of England was that following the Rule of St. Augustine. This was probably because, after imposing the elementary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, the Order was very flexible, allowing a great deal of variation. The Nursing Sisters of St. Bartholomew's, St. Mary Roncevall, St. Thomas's and Elsipgspital in London, all followed the Augustinian rule. There were many others in the provinces. On the Continent as well as in England, the great nursing Orders of Sisters generally adopted the Rule of St. Augustine.

A very interesting Order which undertook nursing was that known as the Gilbertine Order. It was founded about 1148 by an Englishman, Gilbert of Sempringham, who came of noble parents. It is remarkable as being the only English monastic Order. It was a dual Order, as indeed were most of the greater Orders, but in this case the monastery and convent occupied the same site, sharing the same church, but otherwise separated. The nuns followed the austere Cistercian modification of the Benedictine Rule, ordained by St. Bernard of Clairveaux, to whom Gilbert paid several visits. The monks followed the less rigorous Rule of St. Augustine, and their chief duty was to minister to the nuns, especially in regard to their Church Services. These Sisters were very strictly enclosed, all necessary communication with the outside world being carried out by lay Sisters, who were of generally inferior social standing or education, or unsuitable in some way for the vocation of a professed Sister.

The most noteworthy of the Gilbertine Hospitals appears to have been the Hospital of S. Katherine, on the outskirts of Lincoln.

This interesting English Order was suppressed, in common with the other religious Orders in England, by Henry VIII; but even then it had outlived its hey-day.

The Augustinian and the Gilbertine Orders were the most noteworthy of the Orders undertaking nursing in England, the first because it was the most extensive, and the Gilbertine because it was the only English Order founded before the Reformation.

The Hospital of St. Peter, as it was originally called, was, so far as we know, the first English hospital. It was founded by the King, Athelstan (about 936 A.D.), who made a vow at York Minster on his way up to Scotland to fight, that if he were successful he would divert the tax paid by the district to him for the extermination of wolves to a charitable purpose. The vow was fulfilled, and the hospital, for the sick, poor and homeless, as well as for lepers, was built. Various English kings re-endowed the hospital, and after a disastrous fire which destroyed nearly the whole building, Stephen rebuilt it, calling it St. Leonard's Hospital.

Another hospital, classed by Dugdale as belonging to the Augustinians, but possessing its own constitution, which has happily been preserved for us, is the "Domus Dei," or St. Mary's Hospital, Chichester, which was founded between 1158 and 1172.

This, then, is the first part of the Statutes ruling the Brothers and the Sisters of the "Domus Dei," Chichester.

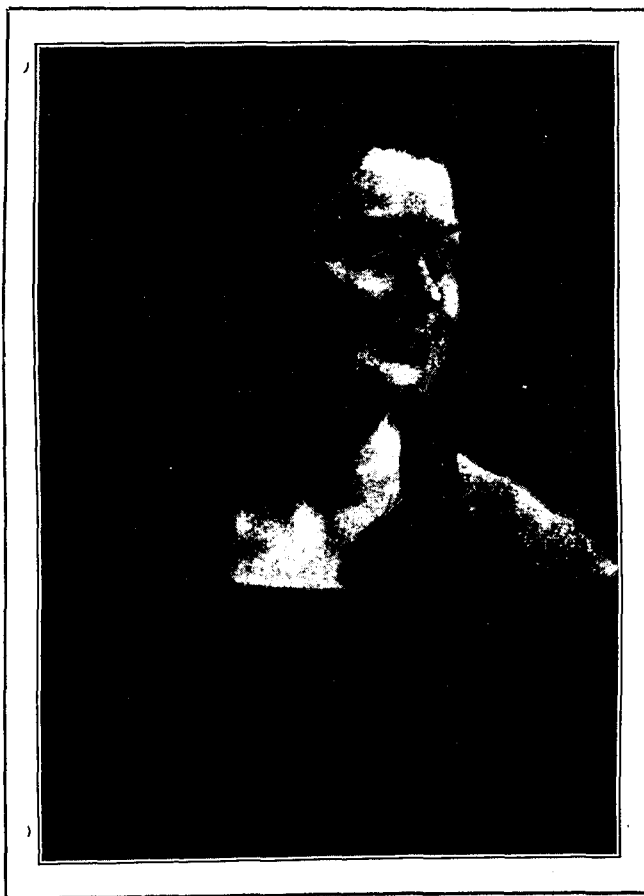
"If any one seeks the Hospital of St. Mary, at Chichester, let the Warden examine whether he is in sound or in infirm health. If in sound health, whether male or female, let the Warden consider whether he is a person of good conversation, of honest life and character, likely to be useful to the House, whether in serving or labouring for the poor. If he should be found such, the Warden shall point out to him the poverty of the House, the poorness of the food, the gravity of the obedience and the heavy duties, which may possibly deter him and induce him to recall his purpose."

Certainly the monastic tradition is still upon us, for is not this the prototype of all the little lectures that Matrons have given to prospective probationers, though the necessity of pointing out the poorness of the food is not now so urgent. But do we not still vow Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, if not publicly at least tacitly, during our training and hospital careers?

THE VOW AND ADMISSION.

"He who is to be admitted must first swear that he will be faithful to the House, and that he will observe to the utmost of his power the rules established in it. Then he must promise three things in this fashion:—

"I. N. promise to God, and to the blessed Mary, that hereafter with their assistance, I will observe towards myself chastity, towards my superiors obedience, and that



MISS MARGARET HELEN HART, AWARDED THE PRIZE FOR THE NUTTING-DOCK ESSAY.

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