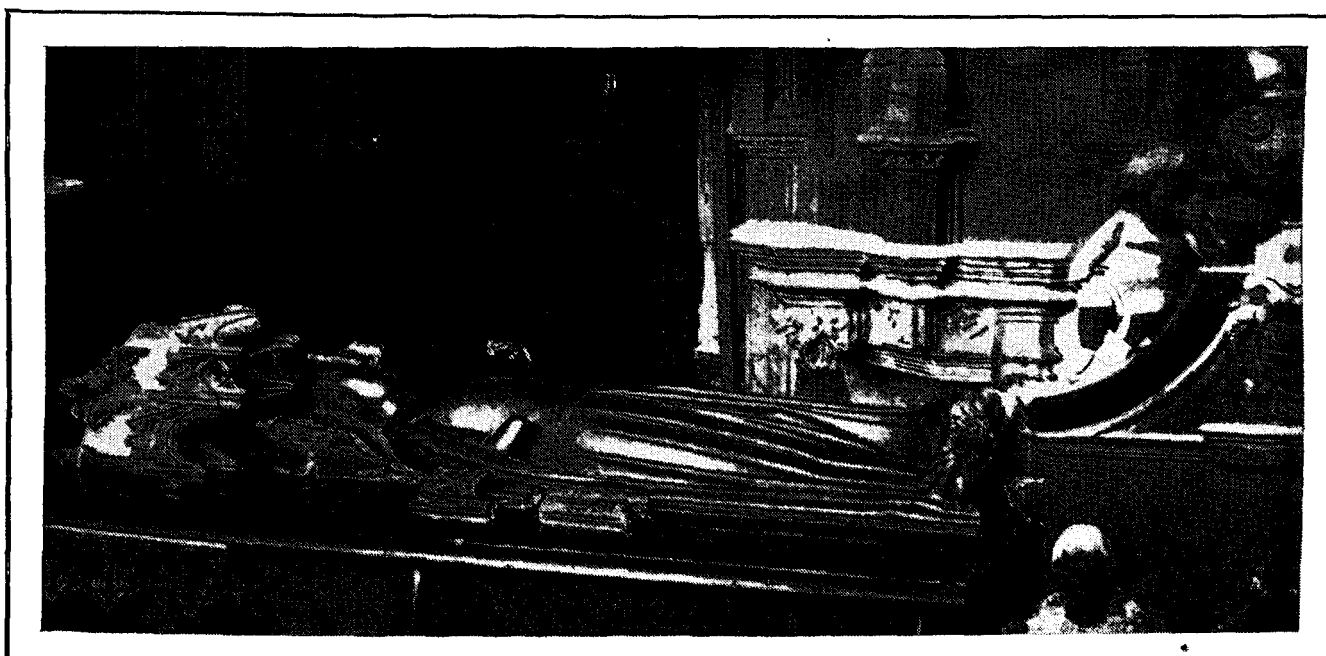


of the Garter. Many stories have been told of the origin of this great Order, but it is now fairly well established that in the Order of the Garter, Edward III simply revived again an old badge of chivalry inaugurated by Richard Coeur de Lion. The latter spoke of his Order as the Knights of the Blue Thong. Edward re-established the Order, as nearly as we can judge, in 1348. He was in the habit of making mottoes, particularly in connection with the brilliant jousts he organised, and it is interesting that this motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*—which arose probably from a chance whim of the King—remains incorporated in the Royal Arms of England to this day. The wardrobe accounts of the time indicate how very splendid were the Garter Robes of Queen Philippa when she assisted King Edward at Windsor in the foundation ceremonies of the famous Order; it must indeed have been a scene of most glorious ceremonial pageantry.

Such were some of the achievements of this great Flemish lady whose smile, or so the chroniclers tell us, won the hearts of her subjects when she arrived, as a girl, in England. She came to be regarded by them as the personification

it memorialised as was possible. Nevertheless, if we make allowance for the dropsical condition and for the results of the cruelly destructive propensities of our ancestors, the figure portrays a lady of fine carriage, handsome and with a head which indicates both intellect and strength of character.

It is not surprising, after a study of the life of Philippa of Hainault, to find that of all the Charters granted to the Royal Hospital and Collegiate Church of St. Katherine's by the Tower, hers was the most business-like, the most detailed, the most comprehensive and the most explicit; it came to be known ultimately as the Charter of Statutes, and, in the last century, when it was resolved to destroy the beautiful old foundation in order to build a dock, it was round the Charter of Queen Philippa that most of the argument for its preservation ranged. To nurses this Charter is, from an historical point of view, most interesting, for it inaugurates the first official scheme for the nursing of the sick poor in their own homes. The Brothers and Sisters were, under the provisions of the Charter, to "visit the sick and infirm there dwelling" (*i.e.*, round the Tower



White marble effigy of Queen Philippa of Hainault, on an Altar Tomb in St. Edward's Chapel in Westminster Abbey.

By permission of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

of qualities of kindness and dignity and good sense and as a friend and comforter to the sad and the sorrowful.

A versatile lady she was in many respects for, during her husband's absence in France, we find her leading the English Army north and reviewing it prior to its engagement with the army of the Scottish King at Neville's Cross. She rode out again to meet it on its victorious return and was mightily displeased when she found that one of her generals, Sir John Copeland, had made off with the prize capture of the day—the young David, King of Scotland. Needless to say the doughty captor did not for long remain in possession of his prize.

In 1357 the Queen developed an internal disease which led to a condition of dropsy, and it is characteristic of the sculptors of her time that her effigy in the Chapel of the Confessor depicts her as she was during her later years when she suffered from this condition; in those days they endeavoured to make an effigy as exactly like the person

of London). And so this Corporation (be it noted St. Katherine's was never a charity but a Royal Corporation) was, in a sense the seed out of which grew, in the last century, the East London District Nursing Association, and later the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses, now the Queen's Institute of District Nursing. The latter body maintained certain connections with and references to St. Katherine's when first it was incorporated, and it is regrettable that these were dropped out when it was, in certain respects, reconstituted.

It is difficult to give any artistic pen portraiture of Queen Philippa. As already indicated hers was an eminently practical and alert type of personality which sent all its energy into the stream of national life. She could never have been representative of a dying epoch; she was actually in her own way, the herald of a new. We have quoted Froissart at the commencement of this article as epitomising the life of this Queen. We will let her speak her own epi-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)