

## NURSING ECHOES.

May has been a "Nightingale" month, as will be realised from our numerous reports. In preparation for the 12th—Florence Nightingale's birthday—her statue in Waterloo Place was decorated by the Nightingale Training School, St. Thomas's Hospital, and by the British Red Cross Society. This year a replica of the very handsome Badge of the Fellowship in flowers replaced the usual chaplet. The Red Cross on a cushion of white flowers was, as usual, very handsome and effective.

On the morning of Sunday, May 31st, Queen Mary, attended by the Dowager Countess of Airlie, was present at Divine Service in the Chapel of the Royal Hospital of St. Katherine, Regent's Park, which has the standing of a Royal Peculiar, under the Patronage of the Queen Consort or Queen Dowager.

St. Katherine's Hospital has an interesting history. It was originally founded and endowed by Matilda, wife of King Stephen, in 1148, as the Royal Hospital and Collegiate Church of St. Katherine's-by-the-Tower, in "pure and perpetual alms for the repose of the souls" of her two children, Baldwin and Maud. The Queen retained for herself and for Queens succeeding her the right to nominate the Masters, and also the Brothers and Sisters, with power to alter the Statutes of the Hospital or to make new ones as they in their wisdom thought fit. Various Charters have from time to time been granted to it, of which Miss Isabel Macdonald, in an article in this JOURNAL on "Historic Royal Nurses," tells us that the Charter of Queen Philippa of Hainault was the most business-like and 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 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 reconstituted.

St. Katherine's, as we know, was re-established in Regent's Park, in 1829, and later, for a time, the headquarters of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses were located there. Around the walls of the new Chapel are shields on which are painted the arms of all the Queens of England since Queen Matilda.

H.R.H. Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, sent a message of good wishes to the President of the New Sussex Hospital for Women and Children at Brighton, when the Nurses' Home was opened by Lady Leconfield.

The news that Her Royal Highness the Princess Arthur of Connaught, S.R.N., had undergone a serious operation was received with deep sympathy by her many devoted admirers in the nursing world, with whom she has come into close touch in her active hospital work, and by the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, of which she is the popular President, and in which she takes so much interest.

All wish her a speedy and complete recovery. Princess Arthur is the only Royal Registered Nurse, and appreciates this honourable status.

Now that Italy has pronounced the war in Abyssinia at an end, the Princess of Piedmont reached Naples recently on board the hospital ship *Cesarea* from East Africa, where as a Red Cross Nurse for a few weeks she will have realised the special needs of the sick and wounded, and can help to provide them.

We could write an interesting chapter on sick and wounded Italian soldiers—sufferers during the Græco-Turkish War, mostly members of the Cipriani Legion. We still hear one home-sick dying boy crying "*duwo, duwo*," because his bed was so hard. To see Sister Warriner prepare a couch of cushions and then without effort pick up the youth as if he were a feather, carry him across the room and deposit him on them, was to witness some skilled handling. He died, but in apparent comfort and peace.

Mostly anarchists, the members of this Legion were men whose vanity was excessive, but who were deeply sensible of courtesy and kindness. Tempers would flash up, a babel of sound result, we had but to appear in the doorway and demand "Silence" and every man instantly obeyed. Smiles, a glimpse of white teeth, the offer of a cigarette and all was peace. The brotherhood of man (excluding Kings) resumed its sway.

Under the heading "Male Matrons for Hospitals" we cull the following paragraph from the *Mental Hospital Workers' Journal* :—

The Rev. Cuthbert Cooper, writing in the current issue of the Gloucester *St. James' Review*, suggests that the only solution for the long working hours of hospital nurses is the appointment of men as matrons.

"We are glad to see," he writes, "that Mr. H. T. Shewell has brought up the matter of long hours at a meeting of the Infirmary Governors recently. Sooner or later the question will have to be faced squarely, for the hours are unreasonable and nurses are deprived of such leisure time as in all other professions and trades are considered reasonable.

"The arguments that girls still apply for posts and that their health stands it, both show a lack of human understanding. Until the problem is solved nurses should be freed from all unnecessary 'red tape' restrictions, which everyone who has had much to do with hospitals knows all about, and allowed concessions consistent with their profession as compensation for long hours and a seven-day week. The solution will never be found until hospitals have men matrons."

In practice we have met such officials in the past and a naughty Sister at Barts aptly termed them "Cock Matrons."

It is incredible that such a recommendation could be seriously advanced in these days in any Review.

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