

and was in the habit of sending him drugs during his illness. He in his turn has addressed many letters to "My lady the most revered and religious Deaconess Olympia." He dwells on her "patience, humility and many-shaped almsgiving." His praises, however, would not always commend her to the mind of the modern nurse, for he goes on to "marvel at the unspeakable coarseness of her attire, surpassing that of the very beggars," and also he commends her for going "for the most part unwashed." No doubt this last habit was regarded by Olympia in the light of a penance, as a means of mortifying her body, for we have to call to mind that the baths of ancient Rome came to be regarded as symptomatic of her decline. Abstinence from them was no doubt partly a protest against decadence and self-indulgence by this patrician lady whose "manly" virtues St. Chrysostom extolled with a kind of oriental elaboration; he used the word "manly" in the sense of courageous, not as implying masculinity. Olympia worked in the church and among the sick, the captives and the poor. Her interest in the sick, and that of the other deaconesses also, may partly have arisen when, in accordance with the statutes controlling their activities, they carried the reserved Eucharist to sick women in their own homes.

Marcella, another Roman Deaconess, is described by St. Jerome as "the glory of the Roman ladies." She was converted to Christianity when very young by St. Athanasius and, while desiring to be a nun, she yielded to the entreaties of her mother and married a wealthy Roman, but became a widow in seven months. Her wealth, beauty and gifts brought her many suitors, among them one of the greatest among Roman citizens, Senator Cerealis. In asking her in marriage he promised to make over his great wealth to her entirely, but this and her mother's powers of persuasion failed to break Marcella's resolution not to marry again: with regard to the offer of the Senator she declared that "if she married again it would be a husband and not a legacy." She turned her beautiful palace on the Aventine into a hospital and a refuge for people in distress, laying aside her rich jewels and the signet ring which was the mark of a lady of patrician rank. At first the Romans derided her simple monkish attire, but soon they learnt to hold in veneration the habit of a deaconess. After her mother's death Paula, whom she had converted to Christianity, pleaded that she would go to Bethlehem to help with work which had been started there. Jerome added his entreaties, but Marcella replied that she could not leave the young virgins whom she was training for work among the sick and the poor. Eventually she left her palace on the Aventine and established her community in a villa which belonged to her near the city gates. At the sack of Rome the Goths entered her villa and demanded from her gold. She retorted "You ask for gold from a woman in clothes like these!" They brutally struck her down but she rose again and sought to shelter from them her favourite virgin Principia. The half-Christianised Goths lost sight of their greed in witnessing her splendid courage and themselves took the two to sanctuary. But the day after these events the great Roman matron passed away in the arms of the girl she had saved; the wounds, and the anxiety she had experienced, were too much for a body worn out by penances and service for others.

In some respects, particularly from the point of view of the Church and its teaching, Paula is to be regarded as the greatest of the Deaconesses. This patrician lady was a descendant of the Gracchii and of the Scipios—indeed, her father claimed to have descended from Agamemnon himself. Paula possessed estates in Greece as well as in Italy but she was lavish in her generosity, and indeed called forth a rebuke from her bishop for what we, in our time, would describe perhaps as indiscriminate giving. She mourned inconsolably the death of her brilliant husband, and it was at this time that she came more particularly under the in-

fluence of Marcella; for her the latter opened up wide new paths. The chief characteristic of Paula was her charity towards the poor and the afflicted. She conformed strictly to the teaching of Jerome that a deaconess must not shrink from touching the wounds of the poor and dressing them with her own hands. And so, instead of being carried through the streets on her litter, this Roman matron visited on foot the poorest houses in Rome, taking food and medicine where there was need and, as was required of a deaconess, keeping the bishop and priests informed of the houses where they should make visitations. It is recorded of Paula that she loved the sick best of all. Although they might be covered with sores she would take them in her arms; she made their beds, dressed their wounds and bestowed comforts upon them lavishly from her own riches. When news was brought to her that anyone was dying she hastened to his bedside to help and to comfort and afterwards she would wash the body herself and place it in its shroud. Marcella is also said to have performed such offices, and doubtless other deaconesses did. It is claimed that Paula built hospitals and hospices on the roads to Jerusalem and also that she founded a hospital in the Holy City itself. Her fame rests mostly on her intellectual acquirements. She helped Jerome to translate the Bible and it was due largely to her insistence and encouragement that he completed those writings which are such a treasured heritage of the church and indeed of the whole of Christendom. Paula it was who converted Pammachius, who became the friend of Jerome, and he placed the whole of the large fortune he inherited from his wife at the service of Christianity. In the course of his activities Pammachius came into contact with the Deaconess Fabiola and together they established a hospital for the sick and for strangers at Ostia, the port of Rome. The children of Paula consecrated themselves for the most part to spreading Christianity and to works of munificent benevolence. The most famous of them is Eustocius, who was trained in Marcella's community and afterwards went with her mother to Bethlehem to establish a community there under the direction of Jerome.

(To be concluded.)

LEGACIES TO NURSES.

The fourth Earl of Yarborough, Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, left an annuity of £200 to his nurse, Miss Grace Farleigh Dunstan.

Mr. Walter Harding, the Liverpool shipowner and philanthropist, bequeathed £12,500 to trustees with a request that out of the income they would continue the benefits he had conferred in recent years on the nursing and other staffs of various hospitals and institutions on Merseyside by way of entertainment at theatres, steamship pleasure cruises, and the provision of books and magazines.

Mr. William Stephen Arnold Tremeur de Poher de la Poer, otherwise Arnold de la Poer, Cadogan Court, Draycott Avenue, Chelsea, left £1,000 to Nurse Dorothy S. Low, "as an appreciation of her unceasing kindness and attention during many years."

"MORE PLEASING" UNIFORMS.

What are termed "one-piece" uniforms are being advocated as useful and becoming for nurses. Just one tidy overall of white linen, V-necked, and with short sleeves to be slipped on over a cotton undergarment. The cap to fit closely over the hair. No more tight fitting dresses, starched collars and cuffs and fly away winged caps.

White shoes and stockings to be worn. The new uniform is described as more comfortable, more practicable, and more pleasing. It all sounds very sensible.

The majority of modern caps worn by nurses are simply hideous. The sooner they are superseded by more sightly shapes the better.

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