

were just as tidy. The operating table was very old-fashioned, and the doctor told me the instruments were the same. He indicated he would so much rather have had some new equipment than a new and empty pavilion. But unfortunately politics have too much influence. Portugal is at present under a form of dictatorship which has undoubtedly "cleaned up the country" to a very large extent. One of its works is a campaign against tuberculosis, special funds being collected and subsidies given towards this object. One very often notices in Portuguese towns bright new pavilions with an inscription indicating that they are anti-tuberculosis clinics. Doubtless the funds for the Santarem pavilion had come from this source and could not be deflected to the hospital proper.

In answer to some questions I learned that the present hospital contained 100 beds and the staff consisted of two male nurses and four assistants and two female nurses and two assistants.

The records of the hospital are kept in the Church of the Misericordia in the town itself. This church is in baroque style; the interior, the pillars and the veins of the vaulting, had first been repainted.

The offices of the Misericordia (a committee which manages charities and hospitals) were beside the church, and I was allowed to see the committee room, with a large table in the centre and nicely carved chairs with embossed leather. Round the walls were enlarged photographs of benefactors and at the end, in the place of honour, a photograph of a portrait of Queen Leonora de Lencastre (Leonora of Lancaster, daughter of John of Gaunt), often considered the special patroness of hospitals, since she founded one at Caldas da Rainha.

A room opposite contained the hospital archives since 1615, bound in parchment. Some were minutes of committee meetings, others were registers of the patients in hospital. Another room housed a library, said to contain 300 books dating from 1615. If anyone wants to write a monograph on charitable and health work in a provincial town of Portugal, there seems to be ample untouched material in the Misericordia Church in Santarem.

GREATER LONDON PROVIDENT SCHEME FOR DISTRICT NURSING.

The Earl of Athlone, who is President of the Greater London Provident Scheme for District Nursing, will take the chair at an inaugural meeting at the Grocers' Hall, E.C.2, on April 19th.

The object of the meeting is not to make an appeal for funds, but is to arouse interest in the Scheme and to explain its purpose.

The common problem of the various District Nursing Services in the Metropolitan Area is the maintenance and extension of their great work of mercy, to the best and fullest advantage of the public whom they seek to serve.

The Scheme aims at providing an organisation, self-sufficient and auxiliary to those existing Services, and its importance lies in the belief that it can materially contribute to the solution of that problem.

To that end, it seeks the sympathy and understanding of all who are interested in matters connected with London's social welfare.

The British railways have arranged that drinking water shall be supplied to dogs accompanying travellers by train at all passenger stations in Great Britain and Northern Ireland on request and without charge.

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

"A SHORT OUTLINE OF NURSING HISTORY."

We have read with unqualified pleasure "A Short Outline of Nursing History" which has been received by the British College of Nurses with greetings from the author, Miss Gladys E. Stephenson, S.R.N., Methodist Hospital, Hankow, Central China, published for the Nurses' Association of China by the Kwang Hsueh Publishing House, Shanghai, 1936. As we read it indeed, our pleasure deepens as the wonderful story is unfolded of "the rich and romantic history which from earliest times lies behind the present-day modern nursing profession."

This "Short Outline" is the foundation of a book prepared in Chinese as the first text-book on the subject, and the author acknowledges the various books which have been laid under tribute in compiling it, in which she rightly places first Nutting and Dock's four volumes of Nursing History, "a rich and inexhaustible mine of treasure for the seeker after origins. . . ."

"Much of the material on China is from the first edition of 'The History of Chinese Medicine,' by Dr. K. C. Wong and Dr. Wu Lien Teh, the publication of whose book marked 'an epoch in medical history.' The story of the growth of nursing in this land (China) has been supplied by the Nurses' Association of China."

Why we should study Nursing History.

In her introduction the author states that "To understand aright the significance of any form of human endeavour the light of past history needs to be thrown upon it. The beginnings of human activity, the motives that inspired the pioneers, the gradual working out of ideals, the story of these, all help to uplift and ennoble any form of industry. To the workers who search out these things comes greater joy in the task, a sense of earnest purpose and a determination to carry on worthily in the future."

"Almost every profession has much of romance and courageous endeavour in its past history. Those who know not this history are not only unable to judge correctly the present tendencies in their profession, but fail to acquire the inspiration that the story of past endeavours can give to them. . . ."

"To understand aright how nursing has developed, nurses need also to know something of the different epochs of the world's history. The rise and fall of Rome, the great crusades of the Middle Ages, and other epoch-making events, have all influenced the development of nursing as a skilled profession. Humanitarian movements also have influenced its status. As the world grew in its sense of responsibility towards the needs of the sick and suffering, kindness towards the unfortunate, and tolerance towards those of differing races and religions, so have humanitarian efforts such as nursing been able to grow and develop in activity and extent."

Origin of Nursing.

"Nursing is one of the oldest arts and is a development of the mother care of the young. . . . The word itself comes from the word meaning 'to nourish.' In its broadest sense it covers not only the care of the sick, the aged, the helpless and the handicapped, but the promotion of health and vigour in those who are well."

"Thus in the primal significance of the title 'nurse' there is the idea of cherishing perfect health, as well as relieving illness, though only in recent years has this aspect of the nurse's work come to be generally recognised."

Essentials in Nursing Development.

The development of the nursing art depends on three things: (1) "First, there must be a strong impulse or motive to care for those who are suffering and helpless."

(2) "While such a spirit is essential, a certain degree of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)