

## RECEPTION AT THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

BY PERMISSION OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

Naturally invitations to the historic and splendid Palace of Westminster were eagerly sought, and those members of Congress who were fortunate enough to be present on July 23rd when the Lord Great Chamberlain, the Earl of Ancaster, received the guests in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords realised that they were there present by the special permission of His Majesty the King, who alone can grant this favour. The guests entered by the Norman Porch. The group of magnificent buildings facing Old Palace yard and New Palace yard comprising the House of Lords, the House of Commons and Westminster Hall, glorified by the Victoria Tower, the Clock Tower, and south by the River Terrace on the Thames, were all open to the guests. One may regard Edward the Confessor, a thousand years past, as the founder of Westminster Royal Palaces, as he was the founder of St. Peter's Abbey.

But there is little space for history in this brief note of the privilege accorded to the International Council of Nurses as the honoured guests with free access to the Gilded Chamber and its Royal Courts and Terraces, the House of Commons and the historic Westminster Hall, bound up with the story of the Mother of Parliaments. Suffice it to say that the guests passing into the Royal Gallery realised at once that in very truth they were in a palace of art, a store-house of beauty in many forms. To wander through its halls and corridors embellished with carving and gilding and mosaic, with statuary and fresco and painted glass, is to offer to the eye a perpetual feast of loveliness. Passing from the Prince's Chamber where is the marble group showing Queen Victoria on her throne supported by Justice and Mercy, we come to the House of Lords, "The Gilded Chamber," which is nothing less than a blaze of splendour. From the first it was intended that it should be decorated on a lavish scale, to be regarded not only as the habitation of the Senate, but also the audience-chamber of the Sovereign. At the south end are placed the Thrones, and at the other the Bar, where Counsel plead before the House of Lords as the Final Court of Appeal. In front of the Throne is the Woolsack, the seat of the Lord Chancellor, and the twelve windows are gorgeous with portraits of our monarchs, the niches between them are filled with statues of Magna Charter barons and the walls glow with frescoes illustrating amongst other subjects the Spirit of Religion, the Spirit of Chivalry, and the Spirit of Justice.

When we came into this glorious Chamber flanked with "Crimson Benches," we paused. Was it true or a mirage that from these august seats of the mighty hundreds of the world's nurses were calmly absorbing its majestic beauty? Indeed, it was no dream. Passing through Courts and Corridors embellished with the glories of handicraft and art we come to the House of Commons, which is separated from "The Lords" by the magnificent Central Hall, a spacious and lofty octagon, the roof inlaid with Venetian mosaic representing the national emblems. The fine oak panelling and stained windows in "The Commons" has no lack of dignified beauty, and it is here that men ascend to pinnacles of glory—or are broken on the wheel. But the glamorous night is calling—so to the River Terrace we wend our way. Here is fairy land, indeed, an elusive scene, twinkling lights, the soft music of flowing water—a perfect summer's night never to be forgotten.

"I just feel like kissing your King for this glorious time," whispered a bright little American lady. We have no doubt reports of this "glorious time" will be carried into many lands making for the amity of nations.

## A HISTORY OF NURSING PAGEANT.

The History of Nursing Pageant produced by the Sister Tutor Section of the College of Nursing, at the Scala Theatre, during the Congress week, July 22nd and 23rd, was, in our opinion, the most entrancing of all the social events offered to its members, and that is high praise when we remember that they were entertained by the Lord Great Chamberlain at the House of Lords with its splendid historic surroundings, and by the Lord Mayor of London, at the Guildhall, of equal historic charm.

The Programme of the Pageant will remain, we feel sure, a treasured memento of the occasion—the well-known picture of "Florence Nightingale receiving the wounded at Scutari," after a print from the painting by Jerry Barratt, adorned the cover.

The Pageant was composed of twelve scenes and six processional interludes. The chief organiser, Miss Hillyers, of St. Thomas's Hospital, had the expert support of Miss Irene Cooper Willis for the descriptive "words." The exquisite Boyd Neel String Orchestra, conducted by Boyd Neel himself, with Louis Willoughby as leader, out of sight Student Nurses sang angelically, and the Spirit of Nursing acted as Chorus.

### Interlude—India 320 B.C.

The dressing of the scenes was lovely and realistic, and the acting of a very high order. A most distinguished physician, Charaka, is welcomed by students. "The wisdom of the serpent god with the thousand heads, who as the depository of all the sciences, and especially of medicine, was supposed to be incarnated in Charaka."

In Scene I we are in the Temple of Æsculapius at Epidauros, 1134 B.C., where Æsculapius and his daughter Hygeia preside over healing ceremonies.

We note the Students of Hippocrates on their way to school at Cos, and it is recorded that "Hippocrates openly recognised Nature and taught that disease was not the work of spirits and demons or deities, but resulted from disobedience to natural laws. He called Nature 'The Just,' and showed that the true art of the physician was to assist her in bringing about a cure. He is still called the 'Father of Medicine,' and the Spirit of the Hippocratic Oath inspires the Medical Profession of to-day."

The Interlude where pass across the stage Women Workers of the Early Church presented:

A.D. 60 Phoebe, the first appointed Deaconess; 350 Olympias, and 390 Fabiola, one of the Patrician Fabian family, who turned Christian and built the first general public hospital, which St. Jerome speaks of as a "Noscomium," a place for the sick as distinguished from one which gives relief to the poor.

In Scene II.—A.D. 1134 we are shown the Military Nursing Order of St. John of Jerusalem. Pilgrims welcomed by Hospitaller accompanied by a Brother of the Order. Nursing Sisters and Crusaders—then a glimpse of the Great War, 1914-1918, where modern military nurses tend the wounded with modern skill.

Scene III.—A.D. 1200. Here we see the saintly St. Francis of Assisi renouncing a life of ease and wealth to become the most gallant nursing missionary to the Lepers. In A.D. 1184 come the Beguines of Flanders, the earliest of the Secular Communities, followers of Lambert le Bègue, who exist to this day, and who have proved that it is possible to live a pious life and do good works outside strict Church Rule.

1226.—Came the lovely Queen Elisabeth of Hungary, a saintly nurse of the Middle Ages.

Scene IV.—1617. Scenes from the life of St. Vincent de Paul, who saw that Charity was noble, but "ill-regulated,"

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