

VISIT TO THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH.

Never could there be a more appropriate means of transport to the National Maritime Museum than by river starting from Westminster Pier, the historic way to Greenwich; at least so thought the Fellows and Members of the British College of Nurses' Administration Class, when on Tuesday, October 5th, seated in the bows of *The Caversham*, they glided through the busy waters of Old Father Thames.

Realising the beauty of the fascinating mysteries of a Whistler impression, so apparent that Autumn afternoon, the party listened with great interest while the various buildings and places of note were pointed out, touching upon stirring Thames-side history.

For 140 miles the Thames is a pleasure river, destined, with 70 miles of ebb and flow (reaching as far as Teddington) to be a river of commerce; for two thousand years there has been a ceaseless pageantry on the Thames, beginning, it is thought, before the days of the Romans. Three hundred years ago it was the very heart of London; every kind of

By this delightful promenade along the east Colonnade the Great Hall of the Queen's House is entered. The thirty rooms of the Queen's House are hung with historic masterpieces, arranged chronologically, ranging from 1485-1720. In Room No. 1, the early Tudors 1485-1558. It was of great interest to the Class to note in this room a fine picture "Thomas Baron Seymour of Sudeley," Lord High Admiral; from the collection of the Rev. George Berens-Dowdeswell.

A remarkable relic is the Chatham Chest, with five locks and five different keys, founded by Hawkins, Drake and others in 1590 to relieve and support disabled and injured sailors.

The Queen's House has been restored to its original beauty, and the carved ceiling in Queen Henrietta Maria's Boudoir, executed by John and Matthias Christmas, was greatly admired.

There was no end to see in the Queen's House, ships' models and fascinating pictures, but the Class must hurry to cross the Western Colonnade to the Caird Galleries. In these Galleries is a unique collection which Sir James Caird has presented to the Nation, consisting of portraits, battle

pieces, engravings, drawings, ships' models and navigational instruments. Entering the Caird Galleries the Belfry vestibule, built of old ship's timber in the manner of the belfries of ships-of-the-line in Nelson's day, houses the bell of H.M.S. *Vanguard*, Nelson's Flagship at the Battle of the Nile.

Needless to say, the thrill of the visit was in the galleries devoted to our National hero, Horatio Viscount Nelson. Many masterpieces of his portrait, battle scenes, and the Nelson relics greatly interested the members, and specially noted was a case containing many relics presented by Queen Mary.

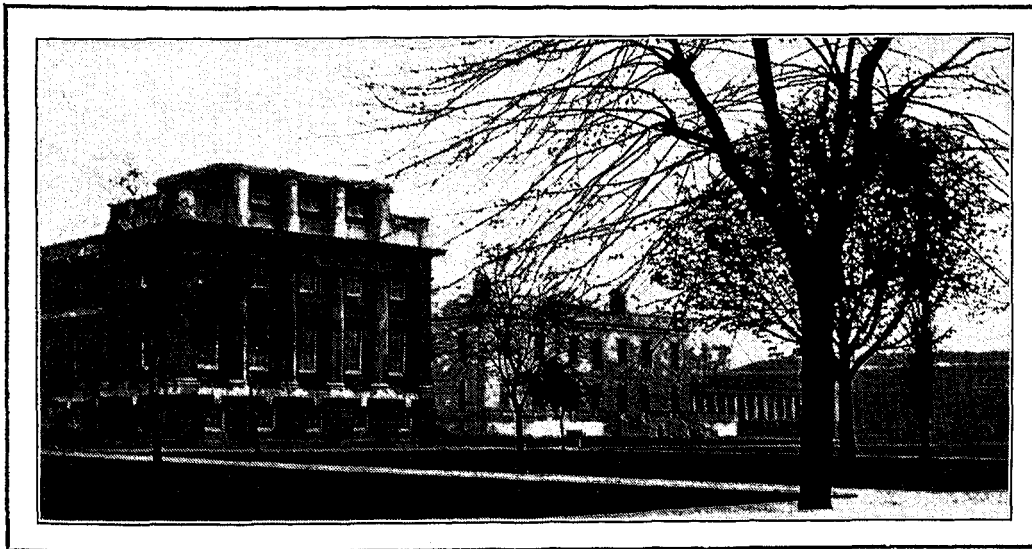
The Chelengk or Plume of Triumph taken from his own turban by the Sultan Selim III, and presented to Lord Nelson after the Victory of the Nile, 1st August 1798, and in which are 400 diamonds, is an outstanding relic, also the uniform worn by Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar, breeches, stockings and gold buckles complete.

Space does not permit of all that could be stressed in this wonderful Museum, the beauty of the ships' models beggar description in their creation.

Lastly among the many pictures in these galleries bearing upon the life and leadership of Nelson, perhaps the most arresting is Turner's "Trafalgar," on the foreground of which Turner inscribed the great hero's motto "Palmarum qui Meriti Ferat" (Let him who best deserves it bear the palm").

At the extreme end of the West Wing, leading off the navigation room, the Class passed on to the pleasant refreshment room where long windows lead to a terrace overlooking the Queen's Garden, and where, weather permitting, tea can be served. Still enjoying the view, all were greatly refreshed with tea served within doors.

Hearing Four Bells ring out, intimating 6 p.m., the



THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH.

pageantry passed to and fro on its waters; it was the means of transport to its Palaces, Abbeys and Monasteries, which were innumerable on its banks.

This short spell of but an hour, and our informant only touching upon the fringe of what there is to learn of the Thames-side, which teems of history, and Greenwich is reached.

The National Maritime Museum, beautifully situated, at the foot of the slope of Greenwich Park, was built more than 300 years ago; the central building is the Queen's House, a palladian country house built by Inigo Jones, by the order of James I, once the residence of Queen Henrietta Maria.

A charming feature of the Museum buildings is the magnificent colonnades (erected as a memorial to Nelson and Trafalgar) measuring in length each 180 feet, the columns of Portland Stone number 96, and are of the Tuscan order. From this viewpoint the visitor has on the left hand Greenwich Park, with the Royal Observatory built by Wren, at Charles II's suggestion in 1675, and on his right hand the noble pile of buildings erected for the Royal Hospital.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)