

A Black Month.

A black month! All the more reason to brace up. This, of course, is what we are doing. In Europe mass murder, rapine, bombs and fire, the enslavement of peoples and violation of women, to say nothing of the sacrificial deaths of a great host of the enemy, blown to atoms or trampled to death on the field of battle. Do not forget these mutilated corpses were born of woman.

The heroic Greeks and Yugoslavs, who, with the British people, have dared to oppose this most brutal tyranny, have won their crown, dead or alive. The most criminal men are those traitors in nearly every country, who have sold their people into slavery. Nemesis is on their track.

In Great Britain and Northern Ireland, night after night the battle rages. Swept away or damaged are many of our most sacred possessions. Further injury to St. Paul's, the Temple, Southwark Roman Catholic Cathedral, Churches, many hospitals throughout the country. We deeply lament the injury to the Chelsea Royal Hospital, the home of our veteran soldiers—one, a hundred years old, was killed in the raid. Many more of our incomparable nurses have been killed and injured, although the risks they face without flinching appear to act as a charm—so many *escape* injury.

Home for Blinded.

Kingston Lodge, in Torquay, has been acquired by the National Institute for the Blind as a home of recovery for war-blinded civilians. It will accommodate about forty people. The purchase price is part of a gift from the British War Relief Committee of America. The house is to be renamed "America Lodge."

Loyalty Penalised.

Northern Ireland is paying the price of its loyal devotion to Great Britain. Devastating raids have been inflicted on its splendid people—Belfast has, of course, been the main objective of barbarism; we were pleased to note that their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, paid it a visit of sympathy and encouragement. The people of Ulster are the last word in courage and devotion to the Crown. No neutrality or kow-towing to tyranny for them!

But Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war,
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity.
SHELLEY: "Hellas."

If Valour's best be gallantly to die
Fortune to us of all men grants it now.
We to set Freedom's crown on Hellas' brow
Laboured, and here in ageless honour lie.
SIMONIDES.

THE "B.J.N." OFFICE SUFFERS FROM BLAST.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING office at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, suffered from blast during the terrible enemy attack on London on April 9th; a window crashed in, but no further damage resulted, for which all concerned are thankful. As it is almost impossible to obtain the services of a glazier in the neighbourhood, the staff pasted up the holes and cracks for the time being, and carried on.

The printers of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING had a terrible task owing to general destruction around to produce the April issue. Better late than never, so we have no doubt all will be forgiven and forgotten. Better luck next time let us hope.

THE PRACTICE OF HEALING IN ANCIENT GREECE.**THE "MYSTERY" THEN AND NOW.**

At this time, when the army of Greece is reflecting something of the great past of that ancient land of culture, it might be interesting to give some consideration to the practice of healing, as it existed in the heroic age of ancient Greece and after. Unfortunately, it is exceedingly difficult to obtain much information on the subject however patiently research may be pursued. Most of the healing in those very ancient times took place in the mystery temples and, in the days when this pursuit of knowledge existed in its greatest purity, only a very small part of what flowed from the mysteries was able to trickle into history; indeed, in connection with other aspects of life, it has been said that it was only when a civilisation was becoming decadent, in olden times, that it began to take historical form. But in any case, there was nothing in those times approaching to our present system of the scientific study of medicine; laboratories and pathological departments did not exist as they do to-day, but the priest-physician pursued studies over a much wider range than what we would regard as within the limits of medical research to-day. Astrology, mathematics, geometry and, above all, philosophy, occupied him, in addition to those subjects more closely allied to medicine and, indeed, it was not until the time of Aristotle that men occupied themselves to any extent with what one might term a materialistic study of anatomy and biology, as a way of approach to medicine.

Egypt as a Source of Greek Medicine.

In an article such as this it is necessary to make a reference to the pursuit of medical knowledge in ancient Egypt, remembering that the Greeks took most of their gods from Egypt with the exception of Zeus and his family; thus a great deal of the medical art, as it existed in Egypt, percolated into Greece and so into Europe, although we must not forget what we owe to the Druids also, who are said by Pliny to have been very expert physicians. The ancient Egyptians had a wide knowledge of the uses of plants and metals, and they related the latter to the stars and planets; the zodiac was to them a source of unending study. They sought for relationships between the stars and metals and ascribed the origin of certain metals to connections between certain stars; also they related different parts of the body to the signs of the zodiac. Here, in ancient Egypt, it is that we find first the Staff of Mercury which has been regarded as an attribute of medicine for thousands of years—the Staff with its intertwining serpents. Mercury it was, both in Egypt and in Greece, who brought down healing wisdom to earth. The Mercury Mysteries taught how healing forces weaved and intertwined in air and light, and the Archangel Raphael, to whom was attributed the power to bring healing to men, has been depicted as holding the Staff of Mercury much as the Archangel Michael is portrayed with his sword raised to fight the dragon. So it was thought that Raphael fought the dragon of disease and drew, with his uplifted Staff of Mercury, forces of healing from the elements. In the temples, both in Egypt and later in Greece, were kept many of the little tame serpents as symbolical of the art of healing. The Egyptians studied mathematics, geometry, geological conditions and the like, in connection with the study of medicine, as they pursued it, but both for them and the ancient Greeks medicine was a kind of quest of the spirit, a seeking after inspiration from their gods for their holy work, for in those days the healing art was one of the holiest parts of the mysteries.

It is important to emphasise very strongly one point in connection with the study of medicine in these ancient

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