

ROYAL SYMPATHY.

THE earnest and personal sympathy with suffering and sorrowing humanity which the present members of the Royal Family evince, has undoubtedly had an immense, though perhaps unrealised, effect upon the hearts and minds of Englishmen. The nation has so often observed the immediate action taken by Her Majesty, or her children, to express their condolence, and to afford their practical help, whenever a local disaster has occurred, that this has, perhaps, come to be regarded as a matter of course, and not as the outcome of the genuine personal benevolence from which it springs. Excellent examples of this are, however, before the public to-day. Miss KATE MARSDEN, whose heroic journey on behalf of the Siberian Lepers has been described in these columns, and who is just about to leave for America in the hope of raising funds, by lecturing through the States, for the foundation and endowment of two Leper colonies, which she will then return to Siberia to superintend, was on Friday morning honoured by a private interview with their Royal Highnesses The PRINCESS OF WALES, and the Princesses VICTORIA and MAUD, and later in the day was presented by Her Royal Highness PRINCESS CHRISTIAN with the Special Badge of the Royal British Nurses' Association—of which Miss MARSDEN is a Member—in recognition of her labours in the cause of humanity, and the gift was enhanced by the gracious sympathy expressed by the Princess with Miss MARSDEN's difficult undertaking. Finally, the same evening, Miss MARSDEN left for Balmoral in obedience to the QUEEN's command, as Her Majesty desired to be personally informed by Miss MARSDEN, of what she has already done, and what she proposes now to do. And it is stated that other members of the Royal Family will probably attend an influential meeting, which will be held to-day in London to wish this English Nurse good-bye and God speed in her work. All of which facts form an admirable object-lesson as to the ennobling influence exercised upon the nation by the Royal Family.

THE NURSING HEROINE.

MY readers will be glad to hear that MISS KATE MARSDEN, after being received by the QUEEN on Saturday, received on Monday, as a token of HER MAJESTY's esteem, a beautiful brooch made in solid gold, consisting of a figure of the Angel of Victory, holding in its outstretched arms a scroll with the words "Victoria, R.I." engraved upon it. This is a gift which we believe is very rarely bestowed by the QUEEN, and only to those who have greatly distinguished themselves.

THE CLERICAL CONSCIENCE.

IN another column, a correspondent draws attention to the Worcester Infirmary scandal from a new point of view. We do not agree with all his statements, but they clearly contain a considerable element of truth. We must confess that we are surprised to find that the assault upon Nurse BELSEY, committed by the Matron and another Nurse, and the abusive vituperation with which the Matron accompanied it, should not only have been permitted to pass unpunished, but should actually have been condoned by the Committee. It is even stated that this body actually undertook to defray the costs of the action brought against the Matron. It is instructive to find that so large a proportion of the Committee are clergymen of the Church of England. Two of the

Bishops have recently made themselves conspicuous by their denunciation of vivisection, and—though this is not a unique circumstance—it was somewhat clearly proved that they knew nothing of the subject upon which they discoursed so fluently. We commend, to public notice, the cruel experimental treatment—which, according to the Bishops, is vivisection—practised upon this Nurse at the Worcester Infirmary, and approved of by so many clergymen, as an interesting illustration of the difference between clerical precept and practice.

The
Sanitary Condition of the Lepers
in the Yakoutsk Government.*

BY MISS KATE MARSDEN, M.R.B.N.A.,

Sister of the Russian Red Cross Society.

IN communicating these impressions of my journey to the unfortunate lepers of the Yakoutsk Government, and in speaking of the sanitary conditions of these patients, I cannot give the information a doctor would, as I am not a doctor, but only a Sister of Charity consecrated to the care and help of the lepers, irrespective of nationality or the place where they are to be found. Having visited the Yakoutsk Government, but especially the Sredni-Velluisk circuit, where the lepers, with only very few exceptions, are in a most miserable condition, I wanted to inform you, as doctors studying skin diseases, how unbearable the state of a leper there is; owing, not only to the poverty of the Yakouts, but also to the non-sanitary conditions in which the lepers live—more like wild animals than human beings. He would be a heartless person who would not be moved to the very depth of his soul at the sight of those dreadful yet silent sufferers, having no hope of recovery, thrust out of their community, and often condemned to a solitary existence for ever. It is hard to be calm and indifferent, looking at these disfigured beings, hardly human, so ravaged by the disease, clotheless, shoeless, feeding on rotten fish, sour milk (tara), and bark of trees (caze); living in miserable dwellings almost devoid of light, warmth, or fresh air. However difficult and full the life of a poor Yakout may be, the privations endured by a leper are still worse, on account of the dread the Yakouts have of leprosy. As soon as a leper is discovered, all ties of relationship are at once broken, the community thrust him out of their midst, he is sent far away from his home into the dense forest, and is placed in so-called dead houses, where he remains forsaken and alone, until death claims him. In making my report to your Society, I do not intend to enumerate all that I had to

*Being a Report read by invitation of the President before a special meeting of the Dermatological Society of Moscow. See further reference to this in the Echoes' Column this week.

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