

A NURSE'S TRIBUTE.

BY

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THE King's sudden death has plunged the British Nation into grief, and we of the nursing profession think with sorrow of the bereaved Queen, so essentially the "Nurses' Queen" in her sudden and awful sorrow. Every nurse of the Empire in India feels that she would give much if only the Queen who has done so much for her and her profession could know how her heart aches for her and how true and deep and loyal are her sympathy and affection for the beloved Queen Alexandra.

And as their names can never be separated, so must the interest of the Royal pair in hospitals and nurses be spoken of together, and those of us who have been privileged to receive the notice and hospitality of the late King and his Queen in our professional capacity now recall such incidents with pleasure.

The Queen worked hard for the "National Pension Fund for Nurses" and many nurses joined it solely because the names of Their Majesties assured them that the scheme was right and fair. Every few years the King and Queen held a great reception for the nurses belonging to the Fund at Marlborough House or Buckingham Palace. I had the good fortune to be home one year when such a reception was held and we went to Buckingham Palace in uniform and medals (by request) and were one by one presented to Their Majesties by name. As the daughter of the first English priest to welcome the Queen, when she arrived off the shores of England to make it her permanent home, and present her with the first gift from the English people, henceforth to be her own, I felt a swelling pride that I too was to be made known to Her Majesty as one of the workers for humanity. The graciousness and personal interest of the Queen as she moved about amongst her guests, talking to us as if belonging to our circle, putting all at their ease, and the joy of the King's presence are buried deeply in our hearts.

The next occasion on which I saw Their Majesties was at the laying of the foundation stone of the Nurses' Home and other buildings at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, when I think the love and outburst of loyalty they received must have lightened even the tired heart of royalty, and certainly their kindly thought in driving so that all the patients who were well enough to look might see them touched the hearts of all the nurses and their charges.

Only a few short weeks ago the Royal message of sympathy was sent to St. Bartholomew's on the death of its honoured Matron, Miss Isla Stewart, and as ever the human personal touch was not lacking as the message specially included the lonely sister, grieving over as sudden a separation as that which has now come upon the Royal House.

It is the repeated acts of this nature that have made us feel these last few days that we are living in the shadow of some terrible sorrow, that hushes our hearts and makes us pray to God for our country, now that our wise, beloved and experienced King has ceased to reign visibly though he still reigns in the hearts of his people, and also for those who have lost their nearest and dearest on earth.