

from the year 1803, when Nelson came out to the Mediterranean station as Commander-in-Chief to direct the blockade of Toulon on the outbreak of the Great War with Napoleon. Nelson made Malta his special base of operations, owing to certain advantages and facilities that for his special purpose it possessed, in his eyes, over Gibraltar. And during the ten years that the Great War with France lasted after Nelson had quitted the Mediterranean in the year of Trafalgar, the special use of having a Naval hospital at Malta commended itself with the same force to Nelson's successors on the station—Collingwood and Lord Exmouth.

The Naval Hospital establishment at Malta at this time comprised one surgeon in charge, one agent, and one dispenser, with a working sick berth staff of attendants that apparently was locally recruited. As was the case with all our Naval hospital establishments at this

period, Malta Hospital came under the general supervision and care of the old Transport Board Office, particularly under the department of the Board then known as the "Department for Sick and Wounded Seamen (Sub-division, 'Foreign Service')." After the Great War, Malta Naval Hospital took the place that it practically holds to-day, as one of the most important of Naval medical establishments outside the great home Naval hospitals of Haslar and Plymouth, next after which it ranked. In the "forties" the old establishment of the hospital, comprising a surgeon, dispenser, and chaplain, was enlarged, the staff of officers now comprising a deputy-medical inspector, a surgeon (who was also store-keeper), and an assistant-surgeon. This was the constitution of the hospital staff, as regards its higher executive, at the time of the Russian War in 1854-55. An additional surgeon was appointed in the



IN ONE OF THE WARDS.

"sixties," and then in 1884 the old-fashioned so-called "nursing staff" of men, which, as in all our Naval hospitals up to that time, had been old sailors or often civilians, was replaced by a trained staff of ladies with a superior position. The lady nurses were first appointed to Naval hospitals in 1884 as an experiment, the four chief hospitals of the Service—Haslar, Devonport, Chatham, and Malta—being selected as the places for the experiment to be tried.

That it answered goes without saying, and in one of our illustrations we see three of the four "sisters" who at the present time are on the nursing staff of Malta Royal Naval Hospital.

It may be interesting to note, by the way, that they hold officer's rank, stand next in degree after the surgeons, and are borne on the Civil Service List as being eligible for pension. The uniform, of a pattern duly sealed at Whitehall, is a charming one, of fine dark blue serge, with a dainty little shoulder-cape faced with scarlet.

The present medical establishment at Malta comprises the following officers: Naval officer in charge, Rear-Admiral Rodney M. Lloyd, C.B. (the Admiral-Superintendent of Malta Dockyard); Deputy - Inspector - General, J. H. Martin, D.S.O. (in medical charge); the Chaplain, Rev. R. D. Lewis; Surgeons, T. Austen, and T. E. Honey, M.D.; the Store-keeper and Cashier, Mr. D. J. Low, R.N. The four "Sisters" are Miss Mary J. Pinnager, Miss Florence A. Moore, Miss Florence H. Porter, Miss Amy Munn. The ward staff consists of twenty—one chief sick berth steward (Mr. Hannaford, R.N.), one first steward, four second stewards, and fourteen sick berth attendants. The average number of patients in ordinary times is from 200



Photos. L. Weber. THE SICK BERTH STAFF. Copyright.

