

UNVEILING OF BUST AT HOSPITAL

Nun's Work Praised

Ceremony at St. Vincent's

An interesting ceremony took place at St. Vincent's Hospital yesterday afternoon, when the mother rectress, sisters of St. Vincent's, and past and present members of the staff assembled to witness the unveiling of a bronze bust of the late Rev. Mother Berchmans, foundress of St. Vincent's Clinical School. The ceremony of unveiling the memorial was performed by Sir Thomas Dunhill, who arrived from England on Monday. Sir Thomas Dunhill is honorary surgeon to His Majesty the King.

Mr. H. B. Devine, senior surgeon of St. Vincent's Hospital, in introducing Sir Thomas Dunhill, said:—"We have assembled to fulfil the sacred obligation of placing in St. Vincent's Clinical School a memorial to its foundress. For some time the members of the original teaching staff, conscious that they have witnessed the birth and growth of this clinical school, have felt that they should erect some memorial to the late Mother Berchmans, which would link her name with the present hospital, and be a reminder of the courage and foresight which she displayed in founding this clinical school. Twenty-five years ago, when the proposal to found this clinical school was mooted, it was regarded as rank heresy, and it required great force of character and courage to carry through the project. As Mother Berchmans had envisaged, it became a school for the younger surgeons and physicians. The services given by many bright brains, including our own Sir Thomas Dunhill, would otherwise have been lost to humanity. It is most appropriate that one of our original teaching members and formerly one of our in-patient surgeons, Sir Thomas Dunhill, is in Melbourne at this time and able to unveil the memorial. It was his brain that originally conceived the project of establishing a new clinical school. In calling upon him to unveil this bust, executed by Mr. Paul Montford, I should like to pay my tribute to Mother Berchmans and say:—"She had always a tear for pity and a hand open as the day for melting charity."

Sir Thomas Dunhill said:—"I am going to unveil a memorial to a woman who was unique in her day and generation, or in any day and generation. This hospital

unique in her day and generation, or in any day and generation. This hospital had small beginnings; at first it was a row of tiny, insignificant buildings on the corner. Mother Berchmans was a true woman, a lady, with great vision, with intuition such as I think very few women in this world have. Her conception of this hospital was what has now been achieved. At that time—30 years ago—she did not know how to set about making St. Vincent's Hospital a clinical school. She consulted the late Professor Sir Harry Allen, then dean of the faculty of medicine at the University. She soon found that there were certain structural difficulties which had to be overcome before the hospital could be made a clinical school. In this respect she was aided by the late Dr. Norris. Then there was another difficulty. The hospital staff was appointed in an autocratic way. Professor Allen pointed out that this would have to be changed, and the mother rectress at once agreed to hand over her autocratic powers in this respect to an electoral board, composed largely of university professors. Thus was first formed the prototype of the electoral board now in vogue in all Melbourne hospitals. The monument to Mother Berchmans, if there could be any monument to her, is partly in this noble hospital, partly in the medical school which has arisen; partly the students and nurses who have been trained in this clinical school; but, above all, in her spirit which still animates this hospital—a spirit that will never die."

Dr. Murray Morton, replying on behalf of the community of the Sisters of Charity, said:—"On previous occasions it has been my privilege to write or to express appreciation of the noble character and ability of this remarkable nun, notably of her vision, her courage, and her charm. We are reminded to-day of another characteristic—she was an excellent judge of men, and in the early days of this hospital she chose as her staff a number of brilliant young men who laid the foundation of the reputation of our clinical school. One of these young men, of whose well earned success we are so proud, is Sir Thomas Dunhill. On behalf of the Sisters of Charity I thank Mr. Devine for having conceived this memorial to Mother Berchmans, and also those members of the original teaching staff whose names are associated with his in this tribute to a beloved personality."

(Picture on Back Page)