

Athens than we have, for we have heard nothing since we left them last Tuesday week; and it seems months! It is no use attempting to send you news of the war, as we never hear the truth about anything. The English papers get it much sooner than we do—in fact we were quite excited to-day over a *Daily Chronicle*, dated April 20th. We have not had any English letters yet, though we have had news of some which are trying to find us. We shall be very pleased to receive them, and hope to be lucky enough to do so; but the postal and telegraphic arrangements here, like everything else, are in the most hopeless confusion."

The friends of the nurses who left London for Athens last week will be glad to know that they have arrived safely.

As we go to press, the following letter has been received from Mrs. Bedford Fenwick:—

Athens, May 13th, 1897.

Owing to an excessive amount of work during the past few days, my notes this week are necessarily very short. In my last letter, I reported the departure of a medical officer and four nurses for Volo to help to bring to Athens the wounded, and I feel sure the readers of the RECORD will be interested to hear of this terrible voyage. The steamer *Albania*, which conveyed our nurses on their mission of mercy, played a very important part in conveying the poor soldiers away from the advancing enemy, as they arrived in the Volo harbour to find the wounded just conveyed from the battle lying on the quay, many having been placed with great difficulty in the *Thessaly* by small boats. Tossed on a tempestuous sea in a perfect hurricane of rain, the *Thessaly* was full of newly wounded, and on the hills beyond the town the Grecian army could be seen rapidly retreating as the Turks came over the hills. Tremendous excitement prevailed, as the time was short in which to remove the patients, many seriously ill, from the Red Cross Hospital, in the town. Eventually; after a terribly anxious time, upwards of a hundred sick soldiers were accommodated on the *Albania*, which brought them safely to Athens in the care of English and Greek doctors and nurses, where they are now being cared for in the numerous hospitals.

This journey was a sad and heartrending experience, bringing forcibly before those in care of the sick the hideous and barbarous nature of war. Amongst the wounded was Captain Birch, whom we have now safely warded in the English hospital at the Piræus.

On Sunday, Mr. Moffatt and his staff returned from Lamia, helping to care for 170 wounded on board the *Epirus*, so that much helpful work has been done in the relief of actual suffering.

On Saturday, Dr. Abbott and three nurses started for Chalcis on the *Eubœa*, for the purpose

of arranging a small ambulance hospital on the island, so that some of the most severely wounded men might be warded without the exertion of the long journey to Athens, and as I write fifty beds are in working order. Sisters Lees, Nesbit and Faukes being on duty there, where it is hoped Sister Warriner will arrive shortly.

In Athens we have been very busy, and as I write, the base hospital at the Militopolos Villa at Piræus, lent to us by the Queen, is equipped and staffed, and will be filled by patients to arrive from the front to-night. One ward is already full, and although purposely furnished with the greatest simplicity it is a charming little hospital, the house being in reality a small palace situated on a lofty prominence close on to the lovely bay, with views of sea and mountains all round. The rooms are very lofty, with tinted walls, white enamel paint and marble fittings. Excellent floors (which, by the way, the Greek women scrub with their feet as a Frenchman polishes the parquet) and perfectly lovely views from the numerous long French windows, outside of which are balconies. The air is soft and fresh, and we have no doubt that the sea breezes will help greatly to facilitate the recovery of the patients. We have comfortable beds with hard and soft mattresses—for Greeks prefer them very hard—and bright coverlets, and simple deal furniture painted white, and plenty of lovely roses, our English flower, adds to the brightness of the *tout ensemble*. As we have a flag-staff on the fine terrace on the roof the Union Jack flies gaily in the wind, and can be seen from the numerous gunboats stationed near the harbour.

Mr. Osborn and Mr. Moffatt and Sisters Hill, Johnson, Whiteford, and Walker, are a most busy and cheerful party, who, with the help of a most original domestic staff, have soon got things into working order. Our cook, Isidore, can speak a little English, our head maid is English, and can speak Greek. Solon, the porter, is a most adaptive youth, who works by signs as deftly as if deaf and dumb, and one little Greek ward maid cleans in the "Greek way," which might be worse. Then, at our gates, is stationed night and day a force of policemen, who keep order and take charge of us in the kindest way. When all is satisfactorily arranged, I am going to have our beautiful hospital photographed, so that those at home, who no doubt long to be with us, shall see where their friends are working. Already numerous "black and white" artists have paid us a visit, and have not omitted to pay us a compliment at the same time.

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

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