

adequate staff of nurses is available, not only for the wounded, but the sick. Valuable lives must not be lost for lack of the skilled nursing which would have saved them. We think it necessary to emphasise this point because there is no doubt that in the past many lives have been lost for want of adequate nursing. We do not complain for one moment of the work of individuals, what we do complain of is our present system of military nursing which sends so small a proportion of trained nurses to care for the sick and wounded. It will be observed that Sir William MacCormac, writing from Frere, mentions "that two army nursing sisters (Miss Sammut and Miss Martin) are hard at work doing excellent work under difficulties." From the nature and extent of the work described in the report we should imagine that the difficulties comprise an absolute inability to cope adequately with the work which imperatively needs to be done. These two points are but echoes which reach us of the war, but they indicate the fact upon which we have for years insisted that the supply of women nurses for the needs of our Army requires to be greatly augmented.

The proportion of nurses to patients considered necessary in most well managed civilian hospitals to-day, is one nurse to every $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 patients. In the army it is, we believe, one on day duty, to every 60 patients, with no provision for the night. It is manifest therefore that it is impossible that they should be nursed as a modern nurse understand nursing. It may be objected that the orderlies are trained nurses, and that the Army Nursing Sisters merely supervise their work. Neither of these assertions is, however, borne out by the facts of the case. There is no training school for male nurses in this country, consequently there are no efficiently trained male nurses. Were the orderlies trained in their work as the male nurses on the *Maine* are trained, their qualifications would be adequate, but this is far from being the case. Cases therefore which need skilled nursing must obviously be cared for by the trained Sisters, or be ill nursed. We must re-iterate that the nursing profession, and we believe the public also, will not be satisfied until the brave defenders of our country receive at least as adequate nursing care as is considered necessary for the sick tramps in many workhouse infirmaries. It is the nations' duty to insist that the staff of trained women nurses should be immediately largely augmented, not only in the base hospitals

in South Africa, but in the station hospitals right up to the front. The Secretary of State for War, has proved himself totally incapable in the past of grasping the significance of thorough reform in this detail of his department, and the fact that there is no Superintendent of Military Nursing in South Africa to deal with this all-important matter, shows that both Lord Lansdowne and his advisers are deplorably obsolete in their arrangements for the good discipline, and, in consequence efficient nursing, of our brave and honoured defenders.

Annotations.

THE REWARD OF GALLANTRY.

We hope that the nation which is so liberally subscribing for the relief of those who are either directly or indirectly sufferers from the present war will realise the duty of seeing that the money so subscribed reaches those for whom it is intended, and will not allow large sums to be invested. These remarks appear to be necessary in view of the large accumulated funds possessed by the Patriotic Fund which were subscribed at the time of the Crimean War, and which still remain invested while some of those for whose benefit the money was subscribed are in great pecuniary distress. A specially sad instance of this has recently been made public in the case of an ex-officer of the Gordon Highlanders, who applied to the Lambeth Guardians for relief. Mr. Urquhart, who is now seventy-three years of age, served in the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny, and on the North-West Frontier of India, and was mentioned in despatches for distinguished bravery. At one time he lived in Grosvenor Square, but was brought to poverty by bank failures and other misfortunes, and he and his wife now live upon ten shillings a week allowed them by friends, out of which they pay six shillings a week rent. They were granted an allowance of five shillings a week by the Lambeth Guardians. That an officer of blameless character, who has rendered great services to his country, should be reduced to such extremity is most pitiable, and, moreover, discreditable to those entrusted with funds subscribed for the relief of such cases. If, now that the dire necessity of this aged officer has been made public, he is not relieved by the Patriotic Fund and enabled to pass the remainder of his days in circum-

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