

Poem.

THE EXPERT AND THE MINISTERS.

(With apologies to the late Lewis Carroll.)

The Expert and the Ministers
 Were talking hard and fast,
 They tried like anything to guess
 How long the war would last—
 "It's chiefly due," the Expert said,
 "To errors of the past."
 "If twenty Corps of Infantry
 Were sent year after year,
 "Do you suppose," said Ministers,
 "They'd sweep the kopjes clear?"
 "I doubt it," said the Expert man,
 And shed a tactic tear.
 "The time has come," he wandered on,
 "To talk of many things,
 Of tape that's red—of sealing wax,
 Select official rings—
 Why criticism should be keen,
 And whether Boers have wings."
 "But wait a bit!" cried Ministers,
 "Before we end our chat,
 We wish to ascertain if it
 Is *us* you're driving at?"
 "No, no," the Expert said, "it's not
 For me to 'bell the cat."
 Just then the Empire hurried up:
 "You've had a costly run,
 It's time you trotted home again,"
 But answer came there none—
 Because the Voters of our Isles
 Had sacked them, every one!

R. C. R.

From the "Westminster Gazette."

WHAT TO READ.

- "The Life of John Ruskin." By W. G. Collingwood, M.A.
 "Unbeaten Tracks in Japan: a Record of Travels in the Interior, including Visits to the Aborigines of Yezo, and the Shrines of Nikô and Isé." By Mrs. J. F. Bishop, F.R.G.S. (Isabella L. Bird).
 "A White Woman in Central Africa." By Helen Caddick.
 "Memoirs of Cardinal Dubois." Translated by Ernest Dowson.
 "Come, Follow the Drum." By John Le Breton.
 "Yeoman Fleetwood." By M. E. Francis.
 "Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of his Countrymen." By F. P. Dunne.
 "A Secret of the North Sea." By Algernon Gissing.

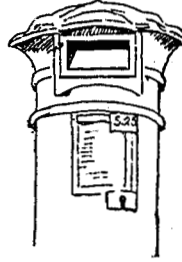
Coming Events.

February 7th.—Princess Henry of Battenberg opens the New Wing of the Royal South Hants Infirmary.—The Prince and Princess of Wales attend the British Empire League's Concert at the Albert Hall in aid of the Widows and Orphans of Colonial Forces serving in the War.

February 8th.—Quarterly meeting of the Matrons' Council, Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, E.C., 4 p.m.

Letters to the Editor.

NOTES, QUERIES, &c.



Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in any way hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

HOSPITAL CABINS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Will you permit me to thank "Traveller" for the encouragement given me in your issue of the 20th, in the matter of Hospital Cabins. I have for the past two years done all I could to get this important improvement in passenger steamers carried through. I know that there are many who also believe in it, but unless they will come forward as "Traveller" has done, and unless influential papers like your own will kindly give notice to the matter, I personally can do nothing. It seems to me that at any rate steamers working an unhealthy coast like the West African, should have hospital cabins. I have never had an experience of being ill on board ship myself, but have frequently had to turn nurse for a less fortunate person and so become acquainted with the misery the absence of a hospital cabin entails, and the very hard work and extra worry thrown on the ship's doctor, as well as on the patient, by the present system. Of course, the hospital cabin and the trained nurse can not diminish the noise which "Traveller" complains of, and which is a very real discomfort. On the ships I know best, the West African, it is true we do not have balls and concerts such as "Traveller" has met with, but we have a steam winch and a donkey engine which quite replace them, but the hospital cabin would diminish the horrible stuffiness so bad for a patient, and give one a bed neither too high nor too low, and many other helps and, I may remark, this hospital cabin is not only badly needed for first-class passengers on West African boats, but for the sick sailors whose condition in the forecabin is not at present helpful to a rapid recovery, though the accommodation for sailors on the English West African liners is far superior to that which I have seen on more showy vessels. I may remark that I think that shipowners should be subsidised by the Government when they devote space to a hospital cabin on their vessels. The branch boats in West Africa of the *Chargness Rennis* line were provided with an excellent hospital cabin on deck, and heavily subsidised by the French Government when I was in West Africa. The boats were built on the Clyde, showing England could do it when she liked to.

Yours truly, MARY H. KINGSLEY.

32, St. Mary Abbott's Terrace,
Kensington, London, W.

A DOCTOR'S OPINION OF NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—The pious hope of a dear "Contented Old Maid" (I know she is a dear because she expresses my sentiments) that Mrs. Garrett Anderson might be able to understand the interest nurses take in their work from its professional side, would not have been uttered had she seen the whole of that lady's

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