

### Army Nursing Notes.

The undermentioned ten nurses of the Army Nursing Service Reserve will embark for South Africa to-day (Saturday) in the Mail Steamer:—Nursing Sisters M. S. Farley, A. Beith, A. P. Carruthers, K. McGonigal, G. E. G. Chapman, M. E. Scott, M. E. Gillam, M. Potts, E. S. Soley, and L. P. Dixon. We are informed that the fifteen nurses reported in our last issue as embarking in the *Lismore Castle* about the 28th ult., will now embark in the above-mentioned vessel to-day.

THE Red Cross Committee deem it of importance that the public should be made aware that there are three distinct classes of Nursing Sisters now employed in South African military hospitals, viz.:—Those belonging to the Regular Army Nursing Service, those enrolled in the Army Nursing Service Reserve with qualifications similar to those required by the Regular Service, and those employed locally and for whom the Central British Red Cross Committee are in no way responsible. Should, however, any of these latter be found to fulfil the rules and requirements laid down for the Army Nursing Reserve Sisters, they will be considered as eligible for enrolment in that body after close investigation as to their characters and qualifications.

Mrs. Richard Chamberlain is returning from Wynburg in high dudgeon. She was one of the amateur nurses who went out to South Africa to help the wounded soldiers, and is, the *Birmingham Mail* says, returning full of indignation at the manner in which she has been treated by the authorities. She has issued a long statement of her case, which she has sent to all those who contributed towards her collection. She has also written to Lord Roberts, and asks that "every woman who has anyone she cares for with our army in South Africa should take the matter up, and draw the attention of their own members to the state of things in the military hospitals." Some interesting items of information may now be forthcoming.

Ten deaths of soldiers occurred at sea on the hospital ship *Lismore Castle*—from tubercular disease, enteric, and dysentery. We are thankful to know that Nursing Sisters are working on board our hospital ships—when the poor fellows are dying they must need a woman's motherly care and sympathy. It is much to be regretted that the *Maine* Committee in London—on which there are no trained nurses—should have decided to omit women nurses from its staff.

In the "House," Captain Norton asked the Under Secretary for War whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that the red cross, as now used for ambulances and hospitals, was too small to be distinguished with certainty at a distance from which rifle fire was now effective, and to the fact that the flag could not be distinguished even at a much shorter distance when there was no wind; and whether he would take steps to provide that the red cross should be made larger on waggons, marquees, and bell tents, and that it should be displayed over hospitals by means of a light canvas in a wire frame.—Mr. Wyndham replied that these questions were under consideration, and the experience gained in the present war would, no doubt, be valuable in enabling the War Office to arrive at a conclusion.

The heart-rending list of "deaths from disease" at the front appears day after day in our newspapers. Bloemfontein, from all accounts, is seething with enteric and dysentery, and the Sisters and nurses are doing splendid work, in so far as their health and strength permits, but we hear of breakdown after breakdown amongst the Sisters, which, taking all things into consideration, is not surprising. One Sister writes:—

"Our work is all so different to what we thought and hoped, and many of us will not be sorry when we turn our faces towards dear old England. 'The live stock' in these parts is beyond description—and flies are not the worst specimens. Water has been so short for washing purposes that many of our patients are covered with pediculi, far worse than in a receiving room at the East end, and the nurses do not escape their attentions—and then the sand, we shan't be accused of want of 'grit' when we return. Nursing in military hospitals is very disheartening in many ways. We can't do for our poor fellows all we wish, and my experience of many orderlies is best left unwritten, there is a screw loose somewhere in the *system*. The truth is *nursing* does not rank. Many military doctors don't grasp that it exists. There will be a fine battle royal before military medicine realises the evolution of the art. Meanwhile we muddle on."

Another Sister writes:—

"We are all on rations of corned beef, bread, tea, coffee, sugar, and jam. As the food question never troubles me, I don't mind the monotony; but some of the sisters don't fancy these things, and would be glad to be home again. Many women don't understand roughing it, as one is bound to do on active service, and are a nuisance all round in consequence. Fine ladies—professional or otherwise—are out of place here—rain, hail, wind, thunder, storm, and tress—or sun, sand, and flies—its all one to the right sort—but you are not asked by the elements to take your choice."

Friends will be pleased to know that Miss M. H. Watkins, who represented nursing in South Africa by selection by Sister Henrietta, of Kimberley, at the International Congress last year,

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