

Army Nursing Notes.

WE are informed, by the courtesy of the Secretary of State for War, that the following Sisters of the Army Nursing Reserve embark for South Africa to-day (Saturday), June 30th:—Nursing Sisters G. Deacon, M. M. McIntosh, E. P. Carruthers, G. L. Shelley, S. A. Claridge, A. E. Byrne, M. A. C. Millington, J. E. Phillips, M. E. Buse, A. M. McIntosh, S. Brown, A. A. S. Webster, F. Donald, A. D. Cameron, C. Condell, K. M. Picot, M. A. Blair, C. D. Elmslie, M. A. C. Grant, and E. McIntosh.

Princess Louise Duchess of Argyll, has consented to become the President of a hospital and convalescent home for 500 soldiers, about to be built by the Absent-minded Beggar Relief Corps, at Alton, Hants. Negotiations with the War Office authorities with regard to the scheme have been going on for some time past, and it is satisfactory that Lord Lansdowne has put no obstacle in the way of the promoters of this helpful work.

We have had proof, during the war, that Princess Louise is fully alive to the necessity of expert help in dealing with professional questions, such as medical and nursing treatment; and we are informed that she is wisely availing herself of the widest experience she can obtain, and that the staff of the new Alton Camp will comprise the best obtainable in the medical, surgical, and nursing professions. We hope Her Royal Highness will insist upon the possession of a three years' certificate of training by all the nurses appointed. It is quite as important that the nurses should show a guarantee of efficiency as the members of the medical staff, none of whom can practise without having registered their qualifications.

The loose methods adopted by the Committee of the Army Nursing Reserve in passing all sorts and conditions of training in the nurses sent to the front, has done much to lower the standard of nursing in public opinion during the last six months. May we express a hope that Princess Louise will help the Matrons to maintain a high standard by selecting only those nurses who are efficiently trained for not less than three years, and who hold the certificates of their school after examination.

Every week the lives of some of our devoted doctors and Sisters who remain at the post of duty at the front are forfeited to disease, and the death of Surgeon-General Forester, Royal Horse

Guards, will be regretted by many friends. He has been doing splendid work in charge of a hospital train in Natal, and died, on the voyage between Durban and Cape Town, of enteric fever. He was buried at Woodstock Military Cemetery, with impressive ceremony.

We hear that several more Sisters are off duty suffering from enteric fever and dysentery, and the last mail brings us the sad news of the death of one of the Scottish nurses, Sister Boyd, who died of dysentery on May 15th. She was buried, as all the Sisters have been, with every mark of affection and regret—the coffin draped with the Union Jack, and covered with wreaths—soldiers, doctors and Sisters forming a procession to the grave.

Mr. Griffith Boscawen, M.P., intends to call attention by question in the Commons to the scale of pensions given to members of the Army Nursing Service. The salary of these ladies does not permit of any substantial savings; in fact, it affords them little more than enough for dress and summer holidays, except in the cases of those who reach the position of superintendent. The highest pension that an Army Nursing Sister can receive is £37 10s. a year after twenty-one years' service, and the average allowance is considerably less. These ladies are compelled to retire at a certain age, which makes their case more trying, as they have enjoyed the use of comfortable rooms, and of good service, and if they desire to live in the metropolis or a large town, they will find all the pension absorbed in rooms. Frequently they are women of good birth who have small private means, but that fact should not be considered, as in the other cases the privation is very sad, and all have deserved better of the State for their splendid nursing work than to be turned off to eke out a beggarly living in declining years. The Sisters hold that a pension of £1 a week would not be too much to expect of the State, and we should like to suggest that it should not be less than £2.

We have drawn attention on various occasions to the quite inadequate salary—£40 a year—and the mean allowances for clothing, etc., arranged by the Committee of the Army Nursing Service Reserve for its members, and when one realises the wear and tear of foreign service, one can only wonder that even the inexperienced medical persons and others who compose the Committee, should expect a woman to keep clean, much less decently clothed, upon the following allowance. We quote from the printed Regulations.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)