

Englishman, been a lot in Russia, and one of the cleverest all-round men I have known. He is oldish, rather like a Jew, well appointed in gold rimmed glasses, and good clean clothes. He is very well read, and awfully kind hearted; we have had him here as a patient, since when he has begged us to go trips on his boat, and sent us fish, eggs and chickens.

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"Fort Johnston is a dead alive place, at least the people are. I insisted upon going up to the lake, three miles off, whenever I could, and stirred the nurses up to play tennis, and interest themselves in their cases more. They have a half-caste Indian doctor who does not understand having nurses.

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"Then I came back here, suddenly I got a wire to ask me to go through to Blantyre to help nurse one of our armed force men with blackwater fever, a Captain G——. on his way down to the war. He was one of the nicest men I have ever met, and I knew him well. I started at once and travelled by night, getting there midday the day after. He was very bad, but got over the blackwater fever, and then his temperature rushed up one day and he died the next. At the post mortem they found a patch of septic pneumonia, any amount of septic bacilli on the brain and other organs. Curious wasn't it? He must have got infection somehow through his mouth, probably through two or three bad teeth at the back, and in his reduced, weak state the germs multiplied. Fancy, the actual hæmoglobinuria came on at 3 a.m. Tuesday morning, and the urine was clear about 2 a.m. on Friday, and in that time he had lost three quarters of his red blood corpuscles. The temperature at first is very high, and sinks to sub-normal on the clearing of the urine. Then all the trouble begins, because the kidneys get blocked with the refuse of the red blood corpuscles, and the patient gets suppression of urine, very bad anæmia, so that he gasps for breath, and all this time, right from the beginning there is most troublesome bilious vomiting; we give iron and stimulants, digitalis, mostly hypodermically, and nutrient enemas, and perpetual fomentations with turpentine to the loins, also turpentine by mouth. Treatment always starts with a big dose of calomel, 12 grains. Lots of people think there is a blackwater bug—but the head of the Malarial Commission, now here, a Dr. D——, who is very sensible and clever, believes that blackwater is simply caused by wholesale death of the malarial parasite. It is a theory which works out very well so far, and would account for Koch's idea that quinine causes blackwater. There must be many things that cause wholesale death of the parasite. In some cases it seems to be a chill, and no doubt quinine is one, though not invariably so, for instance in this case of Captain G——, he had been given no quinine but had a touch of fever and got wet going into Zomba. Another proof towards this theory is that a man may have three generations of malarial parasites in his blood (that means he has had it for three thirty-six hours) and on passing hæmoglobinuria the parasites instantly disappear from his blood—the natural course would be for them to disappear one generation every thirty-six hours—twiggy? Does this interest you?

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"Malaria is really a very interesting study, and especially now, as I think they are getting at the right

treatment. Up till now the lay people here confuse everything with fever. Men get drink gastritis with temperature; sun headache and high temperature; feverish cold, and they call it all malaria, but its not, its generally their own carelessness, and the proof is that they've got no malarial bugs in their blood. I should enjoy so much worrying things out with you, as we used to at the N——."

* * *
March 18th, 1900.

I've had two goes of fever and now am bedridden, after a fortnight's bad dysentery—not so bad as that really, because I'm going to get up this afternoon in the verandah for a bit. I've had a real bad do, and look like a Cretan atrocity or an advanced case of what Dr. Gowers, I think, called "tetanoid chorea." But the mere idea of really going home at last is cheering me mightily. A week ago I thought I was really going out this time, but am planning dinners and hot luncheons and reckless oyster suppers, and everything indigestible I can think of by now. The only thing I bar all the time I'm at home is anything tinned."

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NOTE.

I don't know what she can have been like when she left B.C.A., when she arrived here in June, she was like a walking skeleton.

She doesn't say much herself, but from others who were out there, I have heard what a plucky, unselfish, hard working Briton of a nurse she was. M. M.

FROM THE FRONT.

Standerton,
Transvaal,
11th September, 1900.

DEAR EDITOR.—Three weeks ago we came up to Standerton, the first hospital to cross the border this side, and handed over our hospital at Newcastle, to No. 14, General Hospital. When we first came here we thought we had got to a dreadful place, for about five days the wind and dust were too dreadful for words, then for three days and most of the night as well, one long thunder storm and rain, but since then, with the exception of a little wind now and then it has been perfect, and we like the place very much indeed. The camp is pitched on the side of a hill, and as all the E. P. marquees, which the camp is composed of, are new they look so white and pretty in the sun. On a hill opposite a mile away is Standerton, it can hardly be called a town, straggling Dutch houses, some of the roofs of iron painted red, which makes it very quaint looking, with the green trees round them, and such a bright blue sky above. It is very flat round about and we can walk for miles and miles along the veldt, only we are not allowed very far out. We are supposed to keep within two miles. One hill not very far away we climbed the other afternoon, to see the guns on the top. It is a steep rocky climb, one large gun that they showed us had been all through the relief of Ladysmith. On our way from Newcastle to Standerton we came along very interesting country, first through the tunnel at Laing's Nek, one end of which had been blown up by the Boers, as we came out of it the sun was just rising, and the first thing we saw was Majuba, the view of it and all the other mountains round was lovely. Charlestown was close by, and as we had some hours to spend there owing to

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