

Annotations.

THE TZAR'S NURSE.

The blood of the Tzar of Russia has been subjected to microscopical examination at the Yalta Bacteriological Institute, and it is stated that the typhoid bacillus was found. This of course may or may not be true, as during the whole of his illness the Tzar has not lost consciousness, nor has he been delirious, and indeed the temperature as given to the world by eminent medical savants has not been a typical enteric temperature.

The Vienna *Volksblatt* publishes a message from St. Petersburg that there is no doubt that the Tzar has been dosed with slow poison, and the Russian nobility are, according to this account, bitterly antagonistic to His Imperial Majesty and the Tzaritza, owing to their sympathy with peace and progress. Royalty in Russia is, indeed, sailing betwixt the Scylla and Charybdis of the arrogance of a feudal aristocracy, and the slow, undying hate of a brilliant, terrorised people. Poor Tzaritza! In a bulletin issued from Livadia it is reported that she has nursed her husband with the utmost devotion for the last month, and is his only nurse. It is good news that her health is well maintained, although she shows evidence of want of sleep and anxiety. There is much of the saintliness of her mother, the late Princess Alice, in the temperament of this noble Tzaritza.

WOUNDED ANIMALS IN WAR.

The Rev. F. Lawrence, secretary of the Church Society for the Promotion of Kindness to Animals, has had an audience with Baron Van Hardenbroek, Grand Chamberlain to the Queen of Holland. Having explained his object, which was the widening of the scope of the Geneva Red Cross Convention to admit of the inclusion of veterinary surgeons attending wounded animals on the battlefield, Mr. Lawrence begged that her Majesty would carry into effect one of the aspirations with which The Hague Conference closed, namely, that steps should be taken for the assembling of a special conference having for its object the revision of the Geneva Convention. If Queen Wilhelmina would take the matter in hand now, at the time of her happy nuptials, the Great Powers would readily respond in a favourable sense. Baron Van Hardenbroek expressed the opinion that the British Red Cross Association should appeal

to the British Government to persuade the Swiss Confederation of the necessity of summoning an international conference to discuss the matter.

We hope our Red Cross Society will take the initiative in this matter—the British boast of love of animals is not one of our imaginary virtues. In this connection it is rumoured that the "Dumb Friends' League" have a scheme on foot for providing dumb animals with a National Animals' Hospital, fitted up to date with every necessary appliance to alleviate their silent and often terrible sufferings.

PATIENTS AND PRIESTS.

The complaint of the visiting priest of the Mile End Infirmary that he had not been communicated with in the case of a Roman Catholic patient, whose name had been on the danger list for ten days, calls for comment, as several points arise out of the circumstances connected with the case.

In the first place there appears to be no routine practice approved by the Guardians at this infirmary whereby the ministrations of the minister of the denomination they desire may be accessible to the patients. This should be at once rectified.

In our opinion, when a patient is admitted, his religious opinions should be ascertained, and if he expresses a preference for the ministrations of any particular spiritual adviser, that person should be communicated with, be he Church of England, Roman Catholic, or Nonconformist. The ward sister should be charged with this duty, as in the case of a patient suddenly changing for the worse, it is important that some responsible person on the spot should immediately communicate either by letter or telegram with the minister desired.

In the case of no preference being expressed, the regularly appointed Chaplain, or visiting priest should be sent for. If this is not done the clergy have justifiable cause of complaint, and we think that in the case alluded to above, where the priest accidentally discovered a dying patient in need of his ministrations he had a just grievance. He however was mistaken in "speaking sharply" to the Sister in charge of the ward. If he had fault to find he should have acquainted the Matron, as the head of the Nursing Staff with the facts of the case, and left her to deal with it. He was manifestly in the wrong in himself reproving any individual official, and, by doing so, weakened his own case.

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