

out the campaign there was hardly a hospital where the patient's money, watch, little articles of value, and even clothes were not stolen from him while ill, or from his body when dead. The food and stimulants were stolen from poor patients and sold to those who could pay for them. No more disgraceful scandal has happened than the conduct of this part of the Medical Service, with regard to which, as a whole, the Commission says there was nothing in the nature of a scandal. They have found out about the orderlies, and recommend that further inquiry should be made, with a view to stopping it in the hospitals. But there is no effort to examine the causes, which are inherent in the service, in its recruiting, its pay, its inefficient discipline; and there is a studied avoidance of attributing any responsibility to anyone for this widespread and shameful abuse."

#### CONCLUSION.

"If we have entered on an era when the Imperial and national demands of our position call not so much for new legislation as that we should put our house in order, and if that can only be done in every department by a full, searching, and relentless investigation of its defects, then the worst model we can adopt for that process, and the weakest and rottenest basis of reform, will be the inquiry for which we are now voting this large sum of public money."

Mr. Balfour, replying to Mr. Dalziel, said that a sum of £1,250 was paid to each member of the Hospital Commission, except the chairman, who was unpaid. This Commission has cost the tax-payer £9,000.

The American-equipped hospital ship the *Maine*, at present at Southampton, is to proceed to the Mediterranean, and will henceforward be attached to the British Fleet. The vessel, with only slight alterations aboard, is to become a permanent appendant to the Navy, and will be the first hospital ship thus employed.

In forwarding a handsome subscription to the Matrons' Council Buffalo Delegate Fund, Sister Sidney Browne, who is still superintending the nursing at 3 General Hospital, Springfontein, Orange River Colony, writes: "I have much pleasure in forwarding a subscription for the Buffalo Delegate Fund. I am sure that the educational value of the Congress will be very great, and I am glad the Matrons' Council is to be represented."

"Le Journal d'une Infirmière," published in the *Paris Sédole*, is interesting reading. The writer is Mme. Alice Bron, a Belgian lady, who relates her experiences as an ambulance nurse in South Africa. Starting with the usual prejudices of her country against Great Britain, and full of sympathy for the ill-used Boers, in the course of her sojourn in South Africa Mme. Bron had reason to revise her opinions, and what is more, the moral courage to own that she has

done so. She was with the Boer ambulance at Jacobsdal when this place was occupied by the English. Subsequently, an official at Pretoria said to her:—

"You were there: Is it not true that the English violated the women, treated everyone brutally, and sacked the houses after turning out the owners?"

"But," I said indignantly, "There is not a word, not a syllable of truth in what you have said to me. It is shocking that such lies should be believed and circulated."

"Then," he insisted, "It is not true?"

"I swear it is not, I swear it a thousand times" I replied, and I thought to myself "these people who pass their time in lying will imagine that it is I who lie."

Of the entry of the British troops into Jacobsdal she writes:—

"Truly they are very courteous these men."— "General Wavell paid us a visit accompanied by his aide-de-camp. He went round the ward, stopped at each bed, and spoke a few words to those who were pointed out to him as speaking English, asking them if they wanted anything, and if they were well taken care of, and as they replied they were "all right" the general had a kind word of thanks for the nurse."

We have no space to quote more than a brief extract in conclusion:—

"I left Europe on the 25th of November my heart swelling with pity and brotherly love for the Boers, and I have returned home disillusioned, soul sick and heart weary. Those who have read my article will understand that this-shipwreck of my faith, my belief and my illusions, which were noble and humane, has made me inexpressibly sad."

Poor Mme. Bron! And few who do not already know that the British nation is not all that the foreign Press declares it to be, will believe her story, and revolutionize their ideas, carefully manufactured by a hostile Press, and readily assimilated. Nothing less than a journey to South Africa to see things as they are, for themselves will convince most of our ill-wishers that Tommy Atkins is not the brute they paint him, but the "chivalrous gentleman" that Lord Roberts depicts.

### Our Prize Puzzles.

Don't forget that the answers and the five coupons for this month's Puzzle Prize must reach us by the first post on Tuesday, 2nd of April, or they will arrive too late for the competition, which is a pity. Last month several belated letters arrived after the date named for receiving them, and as the number of answers is steadily increasing month by month it occupies a considerable time opening and tabulating them. We hope for a greater number of correct replies this month.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)