

8. Order and neatness. 9. The training she has received.

A very high honour is the cross given, after ten, fifteen, or twenty years' service, by the Grand Duchess to those who have performed their work with the greatest devotion and skill. This cross is in bronze, silver, or gold, according to the merits displayed or the services rendered.

An important law of March 31st, 1901, ensures adequate compensation to those who are detailed to assist the sanitary service in time of war, who are incapacitated in the discharge of their duty. Thus in the case of the death of one who is maintaining her family it receives a pension.

The Conference of the Committees of German Associations of the Red Cross held at Strasburg on June 4th, 1903, under the presidency of the Governor of Alsace-Lorraine, was engaged in organising the help of women in case of war. M. Buchner, of Darmstadt, reporting on this question, recommended the creation of an official corps of "women helpers of the Red Cross in war" in order to have a sufficient female auxiliary to care for the sick and wounded. They will be prepared by appropriate theoretical and practical treatment; the teaching should be gratuitous and given in conformity with a manual prepared by the Central Committee. Only those who can pledge themselves to undertake work in case of war, and whose health is sound, should be accepted. Classes should be instituted. The lists of members of this auxiliary should be revised each year. Civil and military hospitals, as well as every institution for the sick attaining a given standard of importance, should receive a certain number of these "aides" for a period to be decided upon, keeping in view their practical training, so that in case of mobilisation they can work usefully under medical direction.

In addition to these professional nurses, there are also voluntary nurses who undertake to give their services to the sick and wounded in time of war. One of these voluntary associations is directed by men who are called *Johanniterritters*. To be eligible to join this society it is necessary to have had nine months' training in a local hospital.

At the end of this time pupils receive a diploma incorporating three certificates—one from a pastor as to conduct, a doctor as to health, and one from the directress of the said hospital. They are then free to return home, being bound to give a minimum annual service of six weeks, always in a hospital, never as private nurses. They should be ready to leave home within twenty-four hours after the unexpected arrival of directions as to their journey. They are paid twenty francs a month, but as they are all in society they give their pay to the unfortunate.

Our Foreign Letter.

NURSING IN KASHMIR.

Sheikh Bagh, Srinagar,
Kashmir, Central Asia,

MY DEAR EDITOR,—It is a very long time since you had a letter from my note-book. I am sending you by this mail a photograph of our little dispensary, with myself, Miss Foy (our lady doctor), and Rukam Didi, who is a Seikh and a very clever, intelligent woman. She helps us much in dispensing and dressings. Then there is dear Malbibi; she is like

her name—invaluable. "Mal" is my jewel; "bibi" is added, which means dear sister. She worked for us when I was out here in 1890. I remember her horrified face when I asked her to come and work for us then. She had been a patient with an incurable disease (she thought); her joy at being cured was great, and she always called me her mother. I said, "Well, if I am your mother you must be my daughter, and good daughters always obey their mothers' wishes. I want you to come and help me." At first she said "No, no," but after a month or so she gave in and said, "I will come." At first she was frightened at everything, and wanted to run home. Little by little she improved, and by the time I left for England, in 1895, she was a most helpful assistant. She has been most faithful, and it was a great joy on my return to see what a true, faithful helper she has been. She is the one woman whom I can truthfully say has never told us lies or cheated in prices.

No. 5 is a very high-caste widow woman, who is very poor, but still she keeps to her high-caste style of dress, which you will see is quite different from that of the other two women. Malbibi's sleeve, you see, is wide at the wrist, and a little bit of her turban shows below her white chudda; this means she is a highly respectable woman, but not in Purdah. The other woman's sleeve, you will see, is much narrower and very long. With women of her caste it falls below the hand quite half a yard when they go out or husband or sons enter the room, as it is a disgrace to let a man see their hands, poor things.

Also her head-dress is quite different; she wears it right close to her eyes, and when she goes out she draws it right over her face. It has two little bits of network let in for her to see through.

You will notice the pretty arched window has its carved open work. This lets air in during the summer, and, with a net over it, keeps out the flies and mosquitoes, which are most troublesome. During the winter we cover the open work with white oiled paper, which lets the light in and keeps out the cold air. Glass is very expensive here. Moreover, as we cannot open windows during the summer on account of the heat and insects, we keep to the native custom, which is picturesque, and, above all, cool in summer and warm in winter. There have been about 400 deaths from pneumonic plague in the valley this winter, but there has been no new case for three weeks, so we hope it is dying out.

I wonder if my nursing sisters at home would be interested to hear a little incident which has happened here. Life is so different from that at home. A nurse has to be friend and adviser in joy and sorrow.

One poor widow woman lost her all in the great flood in August. She is a high-caste woman, but very poor, with four children from five to fourteen years of age. They cannot earn more than four rupees per month at spinning. The mother was in great distress about her eldest daughter, who is now fourteen years of age, such a pretty girl, and quite ready to be married. Her mother was in great distress, as she could not buy her any wedding garments. I said, "Well, you see, the girl cannot be married, as you cannot afford to give her one garment." She answered, "Oh, miss, will you not give her the things?" I said "No." A week after, I went again to see them, and was horrified to see the pale pinched faces. I asked the woman why she did not come to us for medicine if they were suffering. She said,

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