

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT.

FROM A BASE HOSPITAL IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Base Hospital,
Kuruman, South Africa.

Before I get on full duty I am taking the opportunity of writing you.

I left Maseru on February 1st, and after a week's work at Wynberg with the Matron-in-Chief, Mrs. Creagh, which I enjoyed, I have been sent with a staff of two Sisters to open up this hospital. We have already patients in, who can at present be treated and cared for without our help, the other cases having been taken by waggon and motors to Kimberley—where, whilst I was there, they had over a hundred military sick.

It was such a delight to me to know that I must

used for military purposes, the general administration has been much more complicated.

Kimberley is at present a huge base for the South African Medical Corps, and wears a very similar aspect to the days when I first made its acquaintance, at the time of the South African War, except that the town has a more important appearance, having so many grand new buildings worthy of the roads made during the siege and war time, to give work to the unemployed—the forethought of the late Cecil Rhodes. The hospital is the latest building contributing to this prosperous, up-to-date appearance. Yet this present war trouble of Africa has again seriously affected the labour market of Kimberley, owing to the closing down of the mines. There is a very striking result, however, in that Kimberley has supplied such a number of men to the new

army of South Africa, both to the ambulance and field forces, that I believe it is a record for the size of the town.

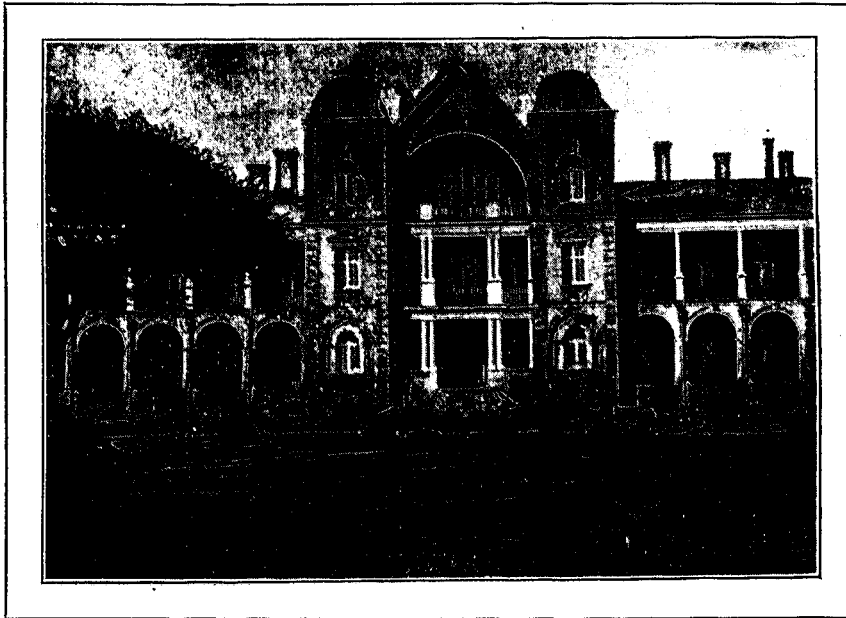
We left Kimberley yesterday morning, accompanied by Lieut.-Col. Mackenzie, A.D.M.S., and Mrs. Mackenzie, in another motor; the roads being still very heavy, we had to come a long way round, making the distance 185 miles. We arrived here at midnight, after fourteen hours' journey, very tired and dusty.

To-day we have visited the hospital, which is the old mission station; the house, which is to be used for acute cases, being the house built for a mission house by

the late Mr. Mackenzie, father of Col. Mackenzie; the rest of the wards will be tents.

A short time ago the rebels held the mission and looted it; part of the comfortable homestead was built by the late Rev. Robert Moffat, father of the wife of Livingstone, and grandfather to Dr. H. A. Moffat (formerly Resident Surgeon at the new Government Hospital, Cape Town), who is at present Major in the S.A.M.S. I am very interested in this historical place, and feel as if the spirits of the departed are here. We should have great success in our nursing, as all their labours seem to have been crowned with success. It is the most fertile spot, and it is difficult to realize in the midst of all this fertility that at a very short distance the desert begins. Yet that is actually the case.

J. C. CHILD.



THE KIMBERLEY HOSPITAL, SOUTH AFRICA.

stay in Kimberley, *en route* for my duty here, as the road was impossible from the heavy rains. We had a stay of six days. The lovely new hospital built on the site of the original one, but on a much larger scale, is now complete. Whilst I was there the patients were being moved in. The whole of the new building is for Europeans. The administration offices, laboratory, &c., are very fine; the furniture and equipment, &c., have been most carefully chosen, all being of latest hygienic and artistic design, suitable for a modern hospital and aseptic surgery. The Matron, Miss Gibson, who evidently had much to do with the choice of this, as well as Mr. Booth, the Secretary, who went to England and superintended the purchase of everything, are to be congratulated on the success of their hard work—especially as for the last six months, owing to the hospital being

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)