

poor men. In one building living and dead were lying together, the living too ill to move, and had not had even water for three or four days. Oh! the state of everything—the weather bitterly cold, thick snow, and not even straw to lie on.

#### A GHASTLY BUSINESS.

It was, indeed, a ghastly business, sorting out living and dead, and more than terrible to see the plight of these poor men. However, we have now got our hospital in a little order, and the poor men have at least sacks of straw to lie on. A few days after we had commenced the work Lady Paget was taken very ill with typhus. Then one of the doctors fell two days afterwards so one sister had to go and nurse them. Three days after the other sister also took it, and for about ten days I was left alone, with only the convalescent Austrians to nurse these poor souls. Never can I forget it. I felt so helpless. I could get little else done than just give medicines, drinks, and other necessaries. But these men are so grateful. Although I seemed the only woman about the place, neither day nor night did I feel in any way nervous.

Typhus is a very distressing disease, and generally patients are delirious for a day or two. Their cries and groans are fearful. Yet it repays one to see them getting better, and you feel all your worry and work have been worth something. I cannot possibly describe to you the gratitude and looks of these men. Their eyes seem to follow you everywhere you move in the wards, and wherever I go every man I pass stands and salutes.

Two days ago two new sisters from England came to help, so things are not quite so hard, but conditions here are very dreadful.

#### NURSING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

For instance, the weather a fortnight ago was intensely cold, with deep snow three days. Unfortunately we were without wood, and could not get it up here. The roads were too bad for the oxen to pull heavy loads up here through the thick snow. These poor men lay without fires, and only one army blanket each. It was too shocking. Yet we were helpless, and could not in any way give them warmth. There was no fire to heat water. Oh! Never have I felt so cold and wretched. Another day when I went on duty, all were craving for a drink. There was not even a glass full of water in any ward, and for eight hours we could get nothing but snow water. No one, until they had lived up here, could in any way realise the difficulties one has, and continually I have asked myself: Is it doing a scrap of good to stay here? Then when I go into a ward and see their faces light up, and hear them say in their Austrian language, "Sister, a drink," I feel I must stay. Also we are terribly short of food. Honestly, for three days everyone complained of being hungry. We could not get food up. Even now our stores are short. The

cocoas, chocolates, Bovril, prepared foods, and biscuits which we brought out have been a real godsend to me. Often I have made the patients these on my little spirit stove, and it has been grand to see their look of gratitude.

These poor patients get very little, if any, attention through the night. Two Austrian men stay up in the ward, but none of them seem to have any idea of nursing. If anyone asks for drinks, and can hold their mug themselves, they get it; if not, well, they just have to go without. They think it wonderful I feed and give the poor, half dead men drinks with a spoon, and a feeding cup I do not think they had ever before seen. Of course, when they are better they have to go to work again, making

#### ROADS THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS,

building barracks, &c., and live again in the basements, barns, &c.; but now they are all cleaned, and they have nice straw to lie on, and a meal once a day. Lots of the poor fellows are well educated, and a few quite wealthy gentlemen. How many times a day do I bite my lips to keep back tears when I see these poor fellows doing horrid work, and living in such bad places.

Their language has been very trying. In one of my wards I have men of nine nations, Serbians, Austrians, Magyars, Italians, Germans, Albanians, Bulgarians, &c., and it is most difficult to know what they want. I love being here, and I cannot imagine there is a more beautifully situated place in the world. As I told you, these barracks are in the mountains. We are at the highest of the Balkan range, and, of course, it is always covered in snow. It is very wild and quiet, except at nights, when the prairie dogs, &c., come out. There is also an eagle which we occasionally see flying around.

#### LIVING IN THE BARRACKS.

We are living in the barracks really, so it is very interesting. We are kept to time by bugle, and it is lovely to see the soldiers training.

Mr. Chichester, who has recently returned from Skolpji, reports that the epidemic of typhus there is now well in hand.

#### ONE VAST AMBULANCE.

The saddest accounts are coming through from the Turco-Russian border, a thousand deaths daily from typhus and smallpox are reported from Erzurum. The mortality is heavy amongst the doctors. The stocks of medicines and disinfectants are exhausted, while the circle of stagnant waters round the town and the unburied corpses everywhere are a fruitful source of disease. As to the villages, massacre, devastation, and famine have been their portion. Trebizond itself is half in ruins, and has been abandoned by all who could afford to leave by sea. The undestroyed part is one vast ambulance.

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