

The National Greek Ambulance Fund.

OUR energetic contemporary, the *Daily Chronicle*, has this week closed its National Fund for relieving the wounded in Greece, and of which our readers will remember Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and Mr. Henry Norman, the sub-editor of our contemporary, are the Hon. Secretaries. No less a sum than £10,000 has been received, so that it has been a great success, while everyone praises the splendid results which the English nursing staff have achieved.

Athens, May 24th, 1897.

The nursing staff of the *Daily Chronicle* National Fund are all working at high pressure, and further details will doubtless be interesting to the readers of the *NURSING RECORD*. The promoters of this Fund, and its generous supporters, have made it possible for English nurses to accomplish work of inestimable value in this country: their trained skill and personal devotion to the sick have been the means of saving many lives, and also many limbs, which mean life to these poor wounded men, and the educational value of their work will only be estimated at its true value in the future.

Upwards of 400 patients are being nursed in the various military and ambulance hospitals in Greece by the nurses of the National Fund. In Athens the Crown Princess has taken about 150 beds under her direct personal care at the *Ecole Militaire*—here Sister Farnsworth acts as Superintendent Sister—and with tact manages to get through an enormous amount of hard work. Sisters Stollard, Curtis, Fox, and Davidson are on duty in these wards, and, with the help of orderlies on day and night duty, the patients are surprisingly well cared for. Of course, it is difficult to give that attention to detail—on which all well-trained English nurses pride themselves—but by grasping the broad outlines of the needs of the sick, each patient can be kept in a cleanly and comfortable condition, and the wards purified and well ventilated.

Sister Flanagan has charge of Professor Forcas' operation ward, and during the past week operations have been performed hourly by this great surgeon. She is much valued for her untiring energy and her dexterity in the preparation of dressings, and the skilled aid she is able to afford the professor at his operations. This ward is indeed full of hope and despair, while surgical skill rescues one poor fellow from the brink of the grave, it is helpless to save those who, in the fortune of war, have been

marked for death. It is sad to see the good priest going from bed to bed administering the last Sacraments of the Church.

At the Military Hospital, which contains 400 beds, and many more patients at the present moment, Sisters Skerman and Coombs each superintend the nursing of 50 patients. They are just the women for the work, full of life and common sense, they "go at it" with unruffled demeanour, and are immensely popular with the senior doctor and the patients. If they ever possessed any insular prejudices, they have wisely left them in the Borough (both hail from Guy's).

During the past week our base hospital at the Piræus has been full to overflowing, and is now working smoothly in every department. It is quite a cosmopolitan institution, as we have patients of four nationalities therein—Greeks, Italians, Austrians, and English. As the hospital is divided into four wards, we have, as far as possible, placed the men of different nations together—this facilitates the work, as the habits and customs of each nationality are strongly pronounced—and it can easily be imagined that the Commissariat Department is by no means a sinecure. In "England," Ward No. 1—breakfast consists of boiled eggs, bread and butter, and tea; in "Greece"—Turkish coffee with copious drafts of water, and half a loaf is the order of the day; in "Italy" *café au lait* and bread and butter is served. Dinners and suppers again are equally varied—ices, fruit, lemonade, red wine, and cigarettes are appreciated by all.

We find food cheap as compared to English prices, and good housewives will be interested in the following quotation from the diet book:—1 Lamb, 30 lbs., 16 drachmas, 40—7s. 6d. in English money. Potatoes, 12 lbs., 1s. 4d. Three chickens, 2s. 4d. Sixteen loaves bread, 3s 10d. Fifty oranges, 2s. 1d.

Sister Parsons, who speaks French and Italian fluently, is just in her element at Piræus; and Sisters Hill, Walker, and Johnson are brisk and busy day and night. We have an English orderly to help them in the wards; and an Italian sailor from the warship *Sardinia*, now anchored in Phaterum Bay, in "Italy," to wait on his countrymen. Madame Baltazzi spends the greater part of the day in the wards, and is invaluable to us. She is as wise and good as she is beautiful—everyone is devoted to her. At night, an English lady, Miss Simmonds, who speaks Greek, is always on duty as interpreter, and is at the same time a most promising probationer—so you see we are certainly in luck's way, and much of the success of our work is the result of the kindly co-operation and invaluable help of Greek friends.

We find the Greek patients very docile,

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