

all massed together indiscriminately—indeed, one poor fellow, who had entered into rest, made a convenient pillow for the head of a dying companion, and I am told by Sister Nesbit—who, with Mr. Fox Symons and Mr. Davis witnessed these horrors—that it was pathetic to see the attempt made by almost helpless men to soothe the agony of those mortally wounded, and to render the “valley of the shadow” less dark and lonely.

In this hole, where one could not stand upright, the suffering endured must have been indescribable; ghastly wounds left undressed, the men lying still, in dirty uniforms, and thick boots, on stretchers on the floor; no sound but that of muffled groans, and not even a cup of water to cool their parched throats, or a hand to offer it.

From the hold of the *Pelops*, the most gruesome of all the steamers, many seriously wounded men were carefully removed, and every empty bed in the Chalcis Hospital was filled—every member of our staff working long into the night to render some help to the sufferers. Those who have seen nothing of war and its resulting horrors can never realise the condition of the patients; many of the soldiers admitted had been half starved for two months, enduring the most terrible physical discomfort, and never having removed their clothing for weeks. Their filthy rags had, in many instances, to be cut off, or almost dropped off at a touch, so that a large majority will require an entirely new outfit, which has been granted, upon application, by the military authorities at Chalcis.

Of the nature of the injuries of these poor men it is useless to dwell—bullets do deadly work, but sometimes miss their mark—one passes through the lung—hæmoptysis follows, medical skill and good nursing make a good fight for it, and the patient recovers; another passes through the abdomen—aseptic surgery comes to the rescue, and after a keen struggle, science again conquers. It is the same with wounded limbs—there is a time for patient treatment, there is a time for prompt removal, but the conscientious surgeon is more proud of a limb saved, and with it perhaps all that makes life worth living to his patient—than of the most brilliant operation by which an arm or a leg may be amputated, and the maimed body left to starve.

Suffice it to say that serious injuries have necessitated many serious operations—the majority of which have had brilliant results—and that many lives and limbs have been saved by careful surgery and good nursing—as I have said before the Greek patients are most grateful, and express their thanks to all the numerous Greek officials who have visited the wards.

Last week, the Crown Prince sent the Head Medical Officer of the Health Department to

visit the wards. He made a minute inspection of the whole hospital, spoke with each patient, and in every ward expressed his gratitude in the most feeling manner at what had been done for the wounded men. On making his adieu, he kissed Sister's hand with much *empressement* much to her confusion, and to the delight of her colleagues.

At the end of ten days, the first tremendous rush of work is over, and as far as it is possible to organise a hospital for Greeks, and where the household work is performed by them, our hospital at Chalcis is in good working order.

There are three medical officers, and in each block of about fifty beds are two sisters, three orderlies, and one interpreter on day duty, and one sister and an orderly at night—one interpreter, an aged man called Insannah, being the medium of conversation at night.

Sister Nesbit finds her hands very full as Sister-in-charge, and her smiling and serene presence is indispensable in the hourly struggles with Greek domestics. No one can conceive the difficulty of getting thorough and systematic work out of the lower classes of this people—they simply have no knowledge of domestic comfort or work, and have to be literally taken by the sleeve and set to their duties every day afresh. To watch a Greek woman attempt to scrub a floor is maddening—a little dirty water in a pan, a dripping rag, and her foot on a brush which she *will* force against the grain of the wood. You go down on your knees; clear a space with a clean flannel; take a well-soaped brush in hand, and give a lesson in English methods. She attempts to imitate, and for a moment you turn to other duties. Two minutes later, the Phroso (these scrub ladies have all euphonious Greek names) is again slopping and dripping, and going against the grain. This terrible helplessness characterises all attempts at domestic work, and the superintendent of this department, who maintains her equilibrium, is sincerely to be congratulated and admired. I have just heard from the Crown Princess that, with the Queen, she intends to pay a visit to the Chalcis Hospital, at the end of the week, upon returning from spending his “name day” with the Crown Prince.

Sisters Child, Dobson, Collins, and Latham arrived safely in Athens on Sunday, and the three former went on duty at the *Ecole Militaire* yesterday, where, during the past week, the work has become somewhat lighter. The latter will have the care of the nine wounded Turks, who are placed in a ward to themselves, and in whom we all take a warm interest. The Crown Princess visits these poor prisoners, and has supplied them with necessaries from her own stores, at which they are highly gratified. The sheets marked “Sophia” are special objects of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)