

The National Greek Ambulance Fund.

NURSING THE WOUNDED.

Athens, June 7th, 1897.

During the past week, many of the soldiers wounded in the Græco-Turkish war have made rapid strides towards convalescence. Some have been discharged from hospital, and others will soon leave, and those who were dangerously injured have either passed beyond all human aid, or are being nursed through the critical period subsequent to serious, but successful, operations. The work is therefore being materially decreased day by day, and some of our Sisters will soon be able to return home.

At Chalcis, although a number of cases have been discharged, others have been admitted, and all the staff are fully occupied. The Queen of the Hellenes and the Crown Princess paid a lengthened visit to the *Daily Chronicle* Hospital on Saturday, and have expressed themselves charmed with all the arrangements made for the comfort of the wounded soldiers.

Sister Nisbet writes:—

“English Hospital, Chalcis,
June 6th, 1897.

Yesterday we were honoured by a long visit from Her Majesty the Queen and Her Royal Highness the Crown Princess. They were accompanied by the Count Massala and others. We had only three hours' notice, though two days before we were told such a visit was possible, on the Queen's return journey from visiting the Crown Prince. We made a little hurried preparation, and had the place as trim as we could, but when everything is planned on strictly useful and not ornamental lines, smartness perforce sinks into the background. However, without undue conceit, I think I may say we somehow managed to look even smart, and we certainly looked clean, which to those who know our difficulties, is saying a very great deal.

We expected the Royal party at ten o'clock, and punctual to the minute they drove up, being met at the gate by Dr. Abbott and his two colleagues, who escorted them across the yard (a clean yard, swept and tidy, but a yard nevertheless, though I wish for literary effect I dare call it by a more aristocratic name!)

The tour of the wards took two hours, and every patient had a few words of kindness and sympathy from both the Queen and the Princess, at which they seemed much pleased. Some of the worst cases called forth special interest, and the Queen has asked for their

names, and particulars of their circumstances, and has promised future help. She left some money in order that one man—a rheumatism case—might have medicinal baths.

Both she and the Princess came into our bedroom—one shared by two other Sisters and myself—and admired, and laughed over, our cubicles, rigged up with wires across the room, to which are safely pinned spare rugs and blankets. The combined washing-stand and chest of drawers also caused amusement. It is an old wooden crate standing on end with a shelf nailed across inside—one of our most useful articles of furniture, and we have many of them throughout the building.

During the visit, Her Majesty repeatedly expressed her thanks and appreciation of our efforts. The patients, she said, were all very happy, and said they had been most kindly treated and made most comfortable. She shook hands with us all round at leaving, and again praised all she had seen. It was very gratifying to have everything so warmly appreciated, and we have all been in excellent spirits since. Encouragement is a splendid tonic, and the Queen did not stint it.

In the afternoon, the captain of the Royal yacht paid us a visit. Going round the wards he compared them very favourably with the Military Hospital here. The Queen visited there after she left us, and was displeased with the condition of dirt and neglect that she found, and ordered 200 of the patients straight off to Athens, taking some on the Royal boat itself. We hear there are still more wounded being brought down from Stylida, and 30 are to be left with us to take the places of those who have already gone out. We shall be glad to fill up again, though with peace at hand I imagine it will be for the last time, and in this case our work is within view of its completion.”

It is reported that amongst the sick soldiers in whom the Queen interested herself at the Military Hospital at Chalcis, several were found to be suffering with typhoid fever, and were lying in bed still dressed in uniform!

At Karavassara the Red Cross Hospital was closed on Friday, and its inmates were transported to Patras—some seventy convalescent patients by boat and carriage, and the serious cases on stretchers—where two hospitals have been arranged for their reception by Dr. Zaïmis, the Greek doctor, under whom our Sisters have been working in Epirus, and who has gained for himself a brilliant reputation during the war for his scientific and humane treatment of the wounded. The Sisters will therefore continue to work at Patras until all the patients are convalescent.

At the Piræus, the majority of patients have

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